

INDIA UNDER CURZON & AFTER

VISCOUNT MILNER in "The Times"

"The book is, indeed, much more than a biography of Lord Curzon as Viceroy. The author ranges widely and boldly over the whole field of Indian politics. . . . presented in a more complete form, or with greater candour, than by any previous writer."

"The Daily Mail"

Though Lord Curzon's policy is the pivot of his argument, Mr. Fraser is no mere biographer. He has given us in 500 ample pages the best account of recent Indian history that is known to us.

"The Standard"

Mr. Lovat Fraser has had a fine subject, and he has written a fine book. Of the manner in which Mr. Fraser has performed the task he set himself it is difficult to speak too highly. His book has all the qualities of the historian. . . . His style is admirable, always easy, fluent and dignified, and at times rising to real heights of vivid eloquence.

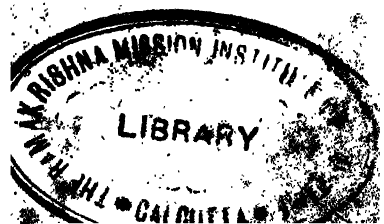




Photo Bourne & Shepherd

Lord Curzon as Viceroy of India.

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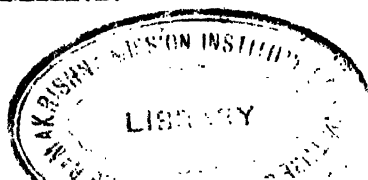
BY LOVAT FRASER



TO ME THE MESSAGE IS CARVED IN GRANITE, IT IS HEWN OUT OF THE ROCK OF DOOM—THAT OUR WORK IS RIGHTEOUS AND THAT IT SHALL ENDURE

Lord Curzon at Mansion House
July 20, 1904

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WILLIAM HEINEMANN
MCMXI



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PREFACE

This book was first planned in 1905, while Lord Curzon was still Viceroy of India. My original purpose, now much expanded, was to write an account of some of the more permanent and enduring features of his Administration, which seemed likely to become obscured in the public mind through special causes. I was unable until last year to begin the task I had set myself, and even then was almost immediately stopped by more imperative duties. This summer it became evident that I must choose between rapid completion and indefinite postponement. The choice was not difficult, for the materials were collected, I knew my subject, and my views were already formed, although in some respects they have undergone revision. I decided to undertake the work at once, though time was pressing; I was about to journey forth again; and even as these words are being printed I shall be pursuing once more the familiar pathway to the East.

It is necessary to say that Lord Curzon is in no sense responsible for this book. He did not suggest it, nor has he seen a line of it. It is in no respect a reflection of his opinions, and he has neither authorised nor inspired a single statement that it contains. Probably there are portions of it with which he will disagree. I have had no access to any private documents or correspondence. For any inaccuracies I am alone to blame.

PREFACE

If the narrative reveals a certain intimacy with events, the explanation is simple. I was in India during the whole of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. I saw him land, and saw him depart. During the greater part of the time I was Editor of *The Times of India*, and the Editor of an Indian newspaper has unusual opportunities for acquiring knowledge. I had many sources of information, generally unsolicited. I have visited many of the places mentioned, and have some acquaintance with other Asiatic countries. I knew personally most of those who figure in these pages, both Englishmen and Indians, and some of them are my friends. Such knowledge of India as I possess did not begin with Lord Curzon's arrival, nor has it ended with his departure. I may add that I never met Lord Curzon, save once for a few minutes at the Delhi Durbar, until long after he had left India, nor did I ever have any communication with him, directly or indirectly, upon public affairs during his Viceroyalty. The contrary has sometimes been alleged, but the suggestion is unfounded.

I have noticed that in books of this description, dealing for the most part with contemporary politics, it is customary for the blushing author to appear for a moment upon the threshold, in order to avow that he has no intention of anticipating the verdict of history. I shall make no such superfluous declaration. This is simply a description of certain phases of British rule in India as I saw them; my views are based upon actual experience, and what history may say is no concern of mine. I have tried to write neither history nor biography, but rather the sketch of a period in which Lord Curzon was the central figure. In so far as the book partakes of the character of biography, I claim exemption from the admonition that it is inadvisable

to write a biography of a man still living. The Viceroyalty of India is an episode in a statesman's life which has no direct relation to the rest of his career. It may colour or sadden the whole of his remaining years, but as a piece of work it is finished for ever when he relinquishes office. The guns have hardly roared forth their final salute when the sculptor is busy upon the memorial statue. The verdict may be written, for India will see him no more. In such cases there are still reticences to be observed, and I trust I have not been unmindful of them; but there can be no impropriety in examining the achievements of a Viceroy of India six years after his Viceregal existence has ceased.

I have endeavoured to be impartial, and know I have been sincere. I have not the slightest personal interest to serve. I occupied at the time, and still occupy, the position of a detached spectator. I believe the period I have described to have been a memorable epoch in the British control of India, and see no reason why it should be left to some one fifty years hence to say so. We are nowadays all so anxious to be thought "judicial" that we fear to praise great deeds worthily done before our eyes. Moreover, British rule in India may be subjected to severe tests long before fifty years are over, and my ultimate object has been to interest English and American readers in some of the Indian problems of to-day.

I am advised to explain, with reference to an expression I have frequently used, that the Government of India are wont to announce their decisions to the public, and sometimes to expound their policy, in the form of "Resolutions." I have occasionally made use of brief passages from articles which I have contributed to various newspapers and reviews,

but such extracts are so infrequent and fragmentary that they do not require specific acknowledgment. With regard to persons upon whom titles have been bestowed in the course of the events here narrated, I have sometimes referred to them by their new, and sometimes by their old designations, as seemed convenient. I have used the expression "native states" and "native army" because I know of no suitable equivalent; when I say "Anglo-Indians," I mean the class of Englishmen who have always borne, and always will bear, that designation, and not the estimable community to whom the Government now seek to apply it; and in the spelling of Oriental place-names I have followed common practice without regard to rules which are never heeded outside a Government report.

L. F.

September 1911

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A GENERAL SURVEY

1. INDIA IN THE NINETIES

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, vast changes were slowly beginning to manifest themselves in the Indian Empire. They were so imperceptible in growth that their full significance was only very gradually perceived. Save for the expansion of its trade and revenue, the development of its internal communications, the leisurely spread of education, and the occasional alteration of methods of administration, the condition of India did not, in the early nineties, seem to have undergone any marked modification. Within its frontiers there had been a prolonged period of unbroken peace. The Indian peoples were apparently more docile than ever, and they were certainly outwardly tranquil. The annual gatherings of the National Congress furnished a vent for the expression of eloquent aspirations on the part of a few ardent politicians, of whom not much was heard for the rest of the year. During the Viceroyalty of Lord Lansdowne, and in the earlier years of Lord Elgin's rule, the political atmosphere of India was on the whole essentially calm. Few foresaw that the time was approaching when the entire country would be disturbed by strife and unrest. Still less was it realised that at no distant date the validity of British rule would be directly challenged by a violent, if minute, section of the population.

When Lord Elgin landed in India in 1894, there seemed no visible reason why the comfortable system of control then

in vogue should not continue upon the same lines for a period measured by decades. The placid confidence everywhere entertained was reflected in the work of the executive. It was efficient, as it has always been, and it was performed with that laborious devotion which has generally distinguished the servants of the Crown in India; but it had become stereotyped, and it followed the appointed ways without much deviation or experiment. In the domain of civil and of military administration alike, there was a disposition to be content with existing conditions and methods, which rendered officers insusceptible to change, and somewhat intolerant of criticism. The favourite and consoling reflection was that as the country remained quiet and satisfied, it might reasonably be concluded that the machinery of control was in no need of examination or improvement.

It would be easy, of course, to advance proofs in rebuttal of these broad generalisations. Lord Lytton's Vernacular Press Act of 1878, which had a brief existence of four years, was an indication that even in an era of notable tranquillity sedition in the native Press was neither unknown nor unregarded. In 1879 there occurred near Poona a little revolt of Ramosis, or watchmen, who once formed a part of the Mahratta Army. The Age of Consent to Marriage Act, though passed in response to the appeals of many influential Indians, produced in 1891 an amount of disquietude which was secretly regarded by the authorities with considerable alarm. In the sphere of political reform, the Act of 1892, which enlarged the Legislative Councils and increased the representation of Indians, marked an important response to the claim of the Congress for a larger voice in Indian legislation. But these, and many other incidental facts which might be quoted, do not materially disturb the contention that for forty years India had been comparatively quiescent.

Yet throughout this period, and beneath the unruffled surface, new currents of thought were forming, and were steadily gaining momentum. The influence of Western

education and of Western ideals was creating a fresh spirit of inquiry. Intellectual Indians became no longer willing to accept the solid fact of British control without question and without criticism. It is no answer to say, as M. Chailley has done, that the portion of the population which demands very large concessions is even now only two per cent. of the country generally. Great changes have almost invariably originated from such small beginnings. When Mahomed rode forth to Medina he was accompanied only by his faithful disciple, Abu Bekr. The Japanese Revolution was really the work of a handful of men. There is reason to believe, moreover, that during this period in India the old instinctive habit of blind unquestioning obedience to the ruling authority was gradually diminishing among the masses of the people, and even in the ranks of the Native Army. A contributory influence was that in the latter half of the nineteenth century India finally emerged from a partial isolation which had endured for centuries. The encircling sea, and the mighty barrier of the Himalayas, no longer served to shield her from the world without. They had never really kept her inviolate, for Indian history is one long recital of invasions; but the quickening of marine communications, and the increasing activity of European Powers in Asia, made India more than ever a prominent factor in international politics. A further cause of change was the growing attention paid by the British Parliament to Indian affairs. With the rise of the Imperial spirit in England, Parliamentary intervention ceased to be spasmodic and fitful. Interest in the welfare of India became constant, every administrative act of the Government of India was liable to be discussed or questioned in the House of Commons, and professional sympathisers with Indian aspirations began to exercise an influence in marked disproportion to their actual numbers.

The effect of these changes first began to be seen during Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty, which by no means fulfilled its early promise of placidity. While Lord Elgin was in India,

he had to confront severe visitations of famine and plague, and to conduct two frontier wars. The delimitation of the Afghan frontier had made it necessary to establish a Political Agency in Chitral, and in 1895 a local rising was followed by the beleaguerment of the British Agent in the Chitral fort. He had to be rescued by a strong expedition, and when Lord Elgin left India the practical questions raised by the decision in favour of the continued occupation of Chitral were still undecided. In 1897 the Waziris rose, and the Tochi Valley was occupied by a British force. Then followed the attack of the Swat tribes upon the Malakand, the raid of the Mohmands upon villages near Peshawar, and the seizure of the Khyber Pass by the Afridis. In a few days the North-West Frontier was aflame from the Tochi to Buner, and it took 60,000 troops and a six months campaign to extinguish the conflagration. These events were not without their reflex influence upon the internal condition of India, for a frontier war invariably produces excitement in the city bazaars until the success of British arms is assured. They further brought forward the whole question of the future of British policy upon the frontier, which was left to Lord Elgin's successor to determine.

The country had coincident troubles of the severest kind within its borders. It had entered upon that cycle of lean years which periodically recurs in India. The monsoon rains, upon which the fate of the people hangs, were deficient in 1895, and there was consequent privation and scarcity in many districts, amounting early in 1896 to famine within a limited area. The almost complete failure of the monsoon of 1896 plunged the heart of India into the most intense and severe famine ever then known under British rule. By the spring of 1897, over four million people were receiving relief, and the mortality was extremely heavy. The resultant distress was so widespread that the country had not really recovered when Lord Elgin departed. The year 1896 was of evil omen for India in another respect. During the early

autumn, the presence of bubonic plague was detected in the slums of the city of Bombay. By the end of the year it had definitely assumed epidemic form, and had been carried into the interior of the western Presidency. At the close of 1898, the recorded number of deaths from plague in India had reached a total of 173,000, which was probably considerably below the real mortality. There had been sporadic outbreaks in Bengal, the United Provinces, Madras, and elsewhere; very serious epidemics had occurred in the states of Mysore and Hyderabad; and the disease had made that first appearance in the Punjab which was afterwards to have such terrible consequences.

Discontent in an Oriental population is not necessarily produced by privation and pestilence. Witness Egypt, where the very growth of prosperity has induced the people to kick as they waxed fat. Yet it has been generally found in India that great visitations of misfortune have not unnaturally produced among the ignorant masses a ferment of unrest, of which subtle agitators have been quick to take advantage. So it was when famine and plague began to decimate the people upon this occasion. Sedition grew rife among the baser vernacular journals. The preventive measures against plague instituted by the Bombay Government were deeply resented in Western India. Poona, always a place of turbulent inclinations, simmered with angry disapproval of the peremptory house-to-house search for concealed sufferers from plague. On the night of the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, the Assistant Collector of Poona, Mr. Rand, was shot, together with a companion, Lieutenant Ayerst. The murderer, one Damodher Chapekar, was subsequently executed. At the time the murders were popularly ascribed to blind vengeance for the plague policy of the authorities; but it was suspected then, and is certain now, that they marked the inception of that conspiracy for the overthrow of British rule in India which has since been brought to light.

The deportation of the Natu brothers, prominent sirdars of the Deccan, and the first trial and sentence of Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak on a charge of inciting to disaffection in his newspaper, the *Kesari*, were other episodes which immediately followed. In 1898 the section of the Penal Code relating to seditious writing in the Press was amended, and the provisions of the law were otherwise amplified; but the new laws did little to check the growth of sedition, because they were rarely put into operation. It has been a peculiarity of successive Governments of India in recent years that they have repeatedly armed themselves with powers which they have been reluctant to use. They seem to have thought that the mere passing of an Act, without attempting to utilise its provisions, was sufficient to prevent seditious crime. Meanwhile the tone of the vernacular Press steadily grew more violent, though its excesses were mild compared to the inflammatory heights afterwards attained. There can be no doubt that the passages for which Mr. Tilak was first imprisoned were comparatively so innocuous that no jury would now convict him for them.

It will be gathered that the task which lay before Lord Elgin's successor was no light one. He had to settle the future control of the North-West Frontier, where the echoes of conflict had hardly died away. He had to decide what was to be done with Chitral. He had to supervise the measures for checking the spread of the plague, a disease which baffled medical science, while the rooted opposition of the people to interference with their daily habits rendered effective preventive measures almost impossible. He had to take over the administration of a country still suffering from the ravages of famine, though abundant harvests and an increasing revenue had shown its wonderful recuperative power. He had to maintain a silent vigilance towards those concerted efforts to sap the strength of British rule in India, the true significance of which was still only just beginning to be perceived. Above all, he had to undertake

the supremely important task of overhauling the administrative machinery of the Indian Empire. There was urgent need to bring prescriptive methods into closer relation with the changing requirements of the time. With India awake and interrogative, the process of administrative improvement could no longer be delayed.

II. LORD CURZON'S PERIOD OF PREPARATION

The appointment of Mr. George Nathaniel Curzon to be the next Viceroy and Governor-General of India was announced on August 11, 1898, although he did not land at Bombay until December 30. In the meantime, though already heir to the barony of Scarsdale, he had been created Baron Curzon of Kedleston, in the peerage of Ireland. Lord Curzon was not then forty, and was the youngest Viceroy who had ever been appointed, with the exception of Lord Dalhousie, who became Governor-General at thirty-six. It was a significant fact that he was, further, the only Viceroy of India, save Lord Lawrence, who possessed any personal knowledge of the country before his appointment. He did not, like one of his predecessors, arrive with no other preparation for his vast task than a hasty perusal of Hunter's "Brief History of the Indian Peoples." For many years the dream of his life had been to govern India. A perfectly true story is told of his first visit to Calcutta, in December 1887, when he was still a young member of Parliament, very little known outside the circle of his Eton and Oxford friends. He stayed in the then not too luxurious quarters of the Great Eastern Hotel, opposite Government House. By a prophetic coincidence, the residence of the Viceroy in Calcutta was copied, with certain additions, from his father's ancestral mansion, Kedleston Hall, in Derbyshire. One day he lunched at Government House with Lord Dufferin. Afterwards, as he was walking back to his hotel, he halted outside the great gates, looked back at the stately

building so reminiscent of the scenes of his boyhood, and said: "The next time I enter those gates it shall be as Viceroy." Lord Curzon has rarely made a determination which has not been fulfilled. Exactly eleven years later his aspiration was accomplished. He had always told his friends that he would be Viceroy if he could be appointed before he was forty. He assumed office on January 6, 1899, five days before his fortieth birthday: and when he then gazed upon India it was, like Childe Roland, with the consciousness of "a life spent training for the sight."

Lord Curzon's intense preoccupation in questions affecting the welfare of India and its peoples, and his exalted conception of the functions and responsibilities of a Viceroy, are the real clues to many aspects of his administration, the nature of which are still misunderstood. From his earliest youth the thought of India "haunted him like a passion." He has himself said that while he was at Eton a sense of the overwhelming importance of India first dawned upon his mind, as he listened to Sir James FitzJames Stephen telling the Literary Society that there was in the Asian continent "an empire more populous, more beneficent, and more amazing than that of Rome." Ever since that day he has remained under the spell of that glamour of the East which draws all men onward; and he has never ceased, and never will cease, to be absorbed by its engrossing and ennobling problems. At the dinner given him by Old Etonians upon his appointment he told his hosts that he had gladly accepted office because he loved India, "its people, its history, its government, the absorbing mystery of its civilisation and its life." From his schooldays, he said, "the fascination and, if I may say so, the sacredness of India have grown upon me, until I have come to think that it is the highest honour that can be placed upon any subject of the Queen that in any capacity, high or low, he should devote such energies as he may possess to its service." He did not, however, make the mistake of supposing that he went forth

to his task with little to learn. None knew better that, in his own words, "the East is a University in which the scholar never takes a degree."

But Lord Curzon's interest in the East did not stop short upon the confines of India. When he was appointed Viceroy, he had seen more of Asia, and studied more closely its history and its existing conditions, than most men living. The common and confessed weakness of the majority of Europeans in the East is that their horizons are limited, generally, it must be added, from sheer necessity. This fact is especially true of China, where most Europeans know little, and care less, about India or Persia. The same charge applies in a somewhat lesser degree to Anglo-Indians; and it is even noticeable in India how special knowledge of one province usually colours quite unduly the Anglo-Indian conception of India as a whole. The problems of the oldest of continents are infinitely varied, but the broad principles which underlie them are everywhere very much the same. They should not be, and cannot be, wholly severed and considered apart. The outward tide of European domination, though now receding, has in all parts of Asia had similar characteristics. The impact of Western civilisation has in all Asiatic countries produced the same essential results. Fully to understand and appreciate the great world-movements now at work in Asia requires knowledge of more than one Asiatic race. The physical barriers which divide India from China may impress the imagination, but they do not alter the fact that the issues now confronting the West are elementally the same in the valleys of the Ganges and the Yang-tse.

Lord Curzon, when first he entered public life, was amply conscious that though India was "the political pillar of the Asiatic continent," the diversified problems of Asia were indissolubly connected. He set himself the huge undertaking of visiting in turn every Asiatic country, and of writing books about them. He took as his exemplar the

late Sir Henry Rawlinson, the decipherer of the cuneiform inscriptions upon the great rock of Behistun in Persia, whom in later years he spoke of as one who was "great as an explorer, great as a scholar, great as a writer, and great as a man of affairs, and who left an indelible mark upon the relations of Great Britain with the Asiatic continent." His special object, he told the Central Asian Society in 1908 in a reminiscent mood, was to determine the part that the Asiatic countries and peoples play in the political system of Asia, and "to endeavour to make some forecast of the part that is capable of being played in the future by them." He duly completed his travels, but only a portion of the projected books ever saw the light. The Fates willed otherwise. It is worth noting that he never intended to write a book upon India. He meant that book to be inscribed by others upon the pages of Indian history.

He first set foot in Asia during a journey round the world undertaken in 1887–88. After travelling through Canada and the United States with Dr. Welldon as far as the Yosemite Valley, he went on alone to Japan, and from Yokohama visited the principal Japanese cities. He then made his way by the China coast to Ceylon, landing in India at Tuticorin in November 1887. His wanderings in India upon this occasion lasted between four and five months, and ranged from Madura to Darjeeling, and from Calcutta to the Khyber; and they included such places as Mooltan and Shikarpur, outside the usual route of travellers.

In the month of August 1888 he started from London again, and accompanied a party of travellers which journeyed over the Transcaspian Railway (then newly completed to Samarkand), in response to a cordial invitation from the Russian Government. From Samarkand he proceeded by road to Tashkent in that exceedingly uncomfortable vehicle, a *tarantass*. The distance was 190 miles each way, and it took him thirty hours on the outward journey, and thirty-six hours on the return. The fruits of this expedition were recorded in

the following year in "Russia in Central Asia in 1889," his first important book.

The Central Asian journey lasted until November, but in August 1889 Lord Curzon set out once more, this time upon the best-known and in some respects the most laborious of his enterprises of travel. Traversing part of the Transcaspian Railway, he entered Persia from Askabad, and in the ensuing six months visited most of the accessible parts of the country except the Bakhtiari region. He was the most indefatigable of travellers, the most indomitable of sightseers. When on the road he would ride seventy or eighty miles in a day, often cooking his own food, and sleeping at the roughest caravanserais. He explored Teheran and Ispahan with toilsome care, and his examination of the ruins of Persepolis was performed with the minute enthusiasm of the trained archæologist. He even found time to cross into Asiatic Turkey and visited Baghdad, and the sacred city of Kerbela; he ascended the Karun River, then coming into prominence as a trade-route; and he inspected the ports of the Persian Gulf, with which his name was afterwards to be intimately associated. He finally reached India in February 1890, and sailed to England from Bombay. The monumental work upon Persia, which described these travels was the outcome. It involved an infinite amount of research, and was the product of three years' incessant toil. Lord Curzon had in the meantime become Under-Secretary of State for India in 1891, but all his spare time was devoted to the book upon which his literary reputation still chiefly rests. The volumes had an instant success, and are now almost unprocurable. The book will never be rewritten, though materials for revision were collected; but though the rapid changes in Persia have rendered it in some respects obsolete, it still remains a masterly presentment of the condition of Persia at the time it was compiled.

In the summer of 1892 the Persian book was completed,

and the success of Mr. Gladstone at the polls had deprived Lord Curzon of office. He fared forth again to the Far East by way of Canada, and visited in turn Japan, Korea, and China. In Korea he rode, by a circuitous route then almost unknown to Europeans, from Gensan through the Diamond Mountains to Seoul. Then he went to Indo-China, and travelled to Tongking, Annam, Cochin-China, Cambodia, and Siam. He journeyed overland from Hanoi, in Tongking, to Northern Annam; and while in Siam he spent some days at Angkor-Wat, on the shores of the Great Lake, where he examined the ruins of the vast and stately temple with the meticulous care he had taken at Persepolis.

It had been Lord Curzon's intention to publish two volumes upon this journey. They were not to be books of travel, so much as attempts "to examine, in a comparative light, the political, social, and economic conditions of the kingdoms and principalities of the Far East." He had begun to realise, as he peered deeper into the mystery of Asia, that "the true fulcrum of Asiatic dominion" lay increasingly in the Empire of Hindustan; and it was to emphasise that vital principle that his efforts were henceforth devoted. He saw, he said, that "the secret of the mastery of the world is, if only they knew it, in the possession of the British people."

The first part of this section of his scheme of book-making, that dealing with Japan, Korea, and China, was published in 1894, under the title of "Problems of the Far East." The book accurately defined the growth of the power of Japan, and presaged the fate of Korea; but it may be said in passing that it did not handle in entirely convincing fashion the problem of the destiny of China. It implied a possible extension of European domination in China which must now be recognised as untenable; and while it expounded with force the fact that China is now essentially unaggressive, it failed to lay sufficient stress on the far more important point that the real Yellow Peril is

industrial. The second part of the project, dealing with Indo-China, was partly written, but never published. A few fragments lie embedded in the files of *The Times*.

In August 1894, Lord Curzon turned his face yet once more towards the morning light of the East. Landing in Bombay in that month, he paid flying visits to Simla and Rawal Pindi, and then marched northwards through Kashmir to the high Pamirs, to which, by the way, he denies the title of the "Roof of the World." Though his main object was political study, he had also in view sport and exploration. He shot *Ovis Poli*, and he settled the then unsolved problem of the source of the Oxus, which he proved to rise in a huge glacier at the eastern end of the Wakhan Pamir. Never before had a British politician of the front rank figured as an explorer, and the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society, which was afterwards awarded to Lord Curzon for his achievement, is more prized than most of his honours. He visited the tiny mountain states of Hunza and Nagar, and on his way back went to Chitral, thus acquiring on the spot a fund of information which proved of the utmost value when Chitral shortly afterwards became a subject of controversy in Parliament. He learned by actual contact the bearings of a complicated frontier problem which it fell to his lot ultimately to settle when he became Viceroy.

By November he was back in India, and on his way to Kabul in response to an invitation from the late Amir Abdur Rahman. He stayed a fortnight at the Afghan capital, and had repeated and prolonged interviews with the Amir. In his memoirs, Abdur Rahman has stated that he discussed with Lord Curzon all the important affairs of his Government, and especially the questions of the frontier and of his successor. Lord Curzon also made the intimate acquaintance of Habibullah, the present Amir, and of his brother, Nasrullah Khan. Afterwards he rode nearly 400 miles through Afghanistan, from Kabul to Kandahar, by

the route which Lord Roberts made famous, and thence to the British frontier outpost in Baluchistan. In those days he sometimes travelled like a whirlwind. He rode from Kabul to Kandahar in eleven days; and between the Pamirs and Afghanistan he covered nearly 1800 miles on horseback and on foot, over some of the most difficult country in the world. He had, however, the advantage of special arrangements everywhere.

By his investigations in Afghanistan Lord Curzon gained an invaluable insight into Afghan character and Afghan conditions, failure to understand which has in the past more than once led to results disastrous to British prestige. But the information he acquired was, from reasons of State, never imparted to the public. He had projected three books upon the regions which he traversed in part during the six months from August 1894 to January 1895. Two were to be upon the Indian frontier, and the third upon Afghanistan. The first of the frontier books, dealing with the section of the frontier from Hunza on the north-east to the Dir-Chitral road on the south-west, was written, sold to a publisher, illustrated, and actually printed, when Lord Curzon was suddenly appointed Viceroy of India. Lord Salisbury said that no Viceroy ought to write a book, a dictum which might also be applied to British generals and admirals on the active list. The book was therefore suppressed for the period of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty; it has never since been issued, and it is now to some extent out of date.

The second volume, which was to have dealt with the southern section of the Indian frontier, was never written. In any case it would probably have involved a separate journey. The third book was to have dealt with Afghanistan upon the same elaborate and comprehensive scale as the Persian volume. All the materials were collected, but the work has never been commenced. Lord Curzon has, however, hinted in a public speech that he still hopes to find sufficient leisure to write "a sustained, succinct, and scientific history" of

Afghanistan and its relations with Great Britain. Meanwhile, the only published records of his expeditions during 1894–95 are his scholarly monograph on "The Pamirs and the Source of the Oxus," which is purely geographical; and the paper on "A Recent Journey in Afghanistan," read before the Royal Institution in May 1895, which is more intimate but necessarily brief.

The ride through the wilds of Afghanistan was the last of Lord Curzon's journeys in Asia in his private capacity. Soon after his return he crossed the Atlantic and married at Washington on April 22, 1895, Miss Mary Victoria Leiter, the lady who was thenceforth for eleven years his devoted helper. President Cleveland and Mr. Theodore Roosevelt were present at the ceremony. The defeat of Lord Rosebery's Administration on a motion by Mr. St. John Brodrick concerning the inadequate supply of cordite ammunition brought Lord Salisbury once more into power in June. Lord Curzon became Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and in the next three years consolidated the brilliant Parliamentary reputation he had already gained. It was said of him that at that period he was easily the most considerable man in the House of Commons next to Mr. Balfour. Circumstances favoured him. He had to lead in Foreign Affairs in the Lower House during a period of exceptional unrest in international politics. Those years witnessed President Cleveland's minatory Message on Venezuela, the Armenian massacres in Asia Minor, the war between Turkey and Greece, the reappearance of the Cretan question, the Spanish-American war, the German seizure of Kiao-chau, the Russian lease of Port Arthur, the Anglo-French Convention concerning West Africa, and the reversal of the decision of the Rosebery Cabinet to withdraw from Chitral. Not only was Lord Curzon powerful and combative in debate, but he seemed to take a positive delight in parrying at question time those inquisitive interrogations which cause some Ministers to lose their tempers. His future in

Parliament was so assured that the announcement in 1899 of his acceptance of the Viceroyalty of India was at first received with some incredulity. Those who knew him best, however, never doubted it. The opportunity of which he had long dreamed in secret had come at last. The appointment was received by the public, and by the home and the Indian Press alike, with a cordiality in which there was scarcely a jarring note. Rarely has a Viceroy-elect set sail for India amid such a profusion of good wishes, or followed by such a general expectation of success.

III. LORD CURZON'S WORK IN INDIA

Lord Curzon, as has been shown, embarked with an equipment for his task such as few Viceroys have possessed. He had spent nearly one year at the India Office and three years at the Foreign Office. He had visited India four times, and had travelled widely within its borders. He knew at first hand the North-West Frontier, always an object of deep anxiety. He had a close personal acquaintance with the other countries of Asia, and had studied and pondered the problems they presented. He had met a singular variety of Asiatic rulers, including such diverse potentates as the Shah of Persia, the Amir of Afghanistan, the King of Korea, the King of Siam (with whom he frequently corresponded), the Emperor of Annam, and the King of Cambodia. Among administrators of lesser rank may be mentioned Li Hung Chang, with whom he was upon terms of considerable intimacy. This preliminary experience of intercourse with Asiatics of exalted position was of great value in his new office, which brought him into constant contact with the princes and chiefs of India. To maintain cordial relations with the ruling princes, to gain their confidence, and to enjoy their esteem, is perhaps the most difficult and delicate of the duties of a Viceroy. That Lord Curzon, like nearly all his predecessors, could not

speak any Indian language, was no real disadvantage. Nowadays some of the most prominent of the younger princes speak excellent English. With those who know no tongue but their own, it is better to converse through an interpreter than to stumble along in halting Hindustani. Lord Curzon on one occasion even expressed the opinion that in prolonged interviews with an Oriental potentate, he regarded it as "of great service not to be too closely acquainted with the language of the country." The use of a competent and faithful interpreter, he said, prevented betrayal into blunders, and gave opportunity for reflection and the consideration of replies.

Some critics, whose views are at least entitled to respect, have argued that the long list of Lord Curzon's special qualifications constituted an excellent reason for not appointing him. Reduced to a simple formula, their contention is that the less a Viceroy-elect knows about India the better ruler he will make, provided he has an open mind and a balanced sense of judgment. The proposition hardly bears serious examination, but it is typical of a certain school of British thought. No one maintains that a man would be a better admiral, or a better general, or a better surgeon, if he was entirely without training or special knowledge; but the task of steering the Government of India through the vast and complex issues which constantly beset it is supposed by these publicists to be best accomplished by an unprepared man with a cross-bench mind.

India cannot be properly governed upon such theories in these stormy days. The now classic instance of Lord Dalhousie is a case apart; and the administration of India is far more of a labyrinthine business than it was in Dalhousie's day. It is a mistake to think of a Viceroy as a judicial referee, surrounded by men necessarily far more competent than himself. A good Viceroy will initiate, as well as adjudge. The Indian Civil Service is the best service in the Empire, but its ultimate effect upon its members is to kill initiative

in all save the men of very strong individuality, who rarely rise to the highest place. The head of the Government must not only decide; he should also, on occasion, lead and direct; and a Viceroy who realises that his office is something more than a court of appeal, therefore starts with a very long advantage if he has made, as Lord Curzon had done, a serious and detailed study of Indian questions.

The record of Lord Curzon's work during his seven years in India covers such a multifarious variety of subjects that it is not easy to present an adequate picture of the volume of his labours. He had from the outset a clear-cut conception of much that he meant to do. In his first Budget speech, in March 1899, he referred to a category of twelve important questions, "all of them waiting to be taken up, all of them questions which ought to have been taken up long ago, and to which, as soon as I have the time, I propose to devote myself." The nature of these questions was only gradually disclosed. Later he formulated another series of twelve projected reforms, and in 1905 he was able to say that both series were complete. In that year, in the course of what proved to be his final Budget speech, he indicated a third series of twelve reforms then in process of accomplishment; but if minor but not unimportant reforms are also included, the third series alone really extended to two dozen projects, most of which were set on foot, and many of them carried to completion. The most conspicuous omission from the programme Lord Curzon set himself was his failure to deal with the question of the union or separation of judicial and executive functions. He said in Calcutta in 1903 that he hoped to come to some decision upon it. Lack of time and the premature termination of his Viceroyalty alone prevented him.

If I were asked to name the four principal achievements of Lord Curzon in India which were of a constructive and permanent character, I would select the partition of Bengal, the solution of the problem of the North-West Frontier, the

reform of the system of education, and the formulation of a land revenue policy which was clear, consistent, and considerate.

I unhesitatingly place the partition of Bengal first, because I believe it to have been fraught with the largest and most tangible benefit to many millions of people. The systematic neglect of the vast trans-Gangetic areas of Bengal was the greatest blot upon our administration of India. Crime was rife, the peasantry were crushed beneath the exactions of absentee landlords, the police system was feeble, education a mere shadow, and internal communications disgracefully inadequate. The old Bengal Government was engrossed with Calcutta and the districts near its headquarters. Eastern Bengal was less known, and less thought of, than the Punjab and the frontier. A single district with an area of 6000 square miles and a population of four millions was sometimes left in charge of a solitary English officer. The division of Bengal formed no part of Lord Curzon's original programme, because at first he shared the prevalent ignorance of the deplorable condition of the remoter portion of the province. He really drifted into the project by accident, and, as will be shown, largely without the elaborate premeditation which usually marked his reforms; but by it he will probably be best remembered, and, as all impartial persons who have seen the new province believe, ultimately blessed.

When Lord Curzon went to India, we had no frontier policy save that of alternate vengeance and inaction. We had spent crores of rupees on futile expeditions. In the four years before his arrival five millions sterling was expended on frontier wars. He formulated definite principles to take the place of the old muddled methods. He withdrew British forces from perilous advanced positions; he made the tribesmen responsible for the defence of tribal country, and he concentrated British forces in British territory behind them as "a safeguard and a support." He devised a scheme

for the retention of Chitral which maintained our hold upon that important territory with a minimum of risk. Time amply justified his prescience. In seven years he only spent a quarter of a million sterling upon repressive measures, and only found it necessary to institute one blockade against a refractory tribe. Finality is never reached upon the frontier, and there has been one minor expedition since his departure; but the quietude which prevailed throughout the rest of the frontier during the brief rising among the Mohmands and the Zakka Khel is the best proof of the solid results of his work.

The educational reforms of Lord Curzon are in some respects the most strongly marked feature of his Viceroyalty. His excessive labours during the preliminary conference of experts at Simla produced the first signs of that failure of health from which he never completely rallied; and his legislation for the reform of the Indian Universities aroused a storm of hostile criticism among certain sections of the educated classes, and earned him their animosity during the remainder of his term of office. Opposition did not daunt his determination to cleanse and improve every section of the educational system — University, higher, secondary, technical, and elementary. He introduced order where there was chaos; he purged the Universities of their obsolete and inefficient methods of control, and he gave a permanent impetus to the spread of primary education. It is scarcely realised that when he went to India four out of every five villages were without a school, and three out of every four Indian boys grew up without any education at all. Primary education in India is even now still in its infancy, and the Universities are only slowly working out their own salvation; but Lord Curzon rescued Indian education from the slough into which it had sunk, and placed it at last upon the right path.

His land revenue policy is less visible in a concrete form, but its effects were far more universal than any other branch

of his work. Its importance is quite unrealised in England. The land question lies at the back of every other Indian question. Nine-tenths of the whole population is rural; and it has been estimated that nine-tenths of the rural population is dependent, directly or indirectly, upon agriculture. Problems concerning Indian land tenure and settlement, revenue assessment and collection, are commonly regarded as repellent. They are not so in fact, for they present fascinating aspects. No other problems touch the life of the people so nearly. To understand them, even in a superficial degree, is to begin to understand India. Views about India which do not include in their foundations some comprehension of questions affecting the land are for the most part comparatively worthless.

Legislation about land is unceasing in India, but at the period under consideration it had ceased to be co-ordinated and guided by a broad general policy. There can be no doubt, moreover, that revenue administration had tended to become mechanical. Land revenue assessments were not as a rule unduly heavy; taking the country as a whole, they were comparatively light; but it may be admitted now that the spirit in which they were collected was too often harsh and inflexible. There were even cases, though these were not numerous, where the cultivators were assessed in appreciable excess of their ability to pay in years of scarcity. The local governments thought more about getting in their money than about the condition of the people; the central government were too preoccupied to plunge into land revenue mysteries. Agitators, in England and in India, arose to make the wildest and most indefensible statements concerning the land system. The authorities either ignored the charges levelled against them, or made highly technical and wholly inadequate replies.

Lord Curzon early turned his attention to land administration. At his instance the methods and character of revenue collection in the various provinces were closely

scrutinised. He laid down the broad principles which should guide the local governments in their land policy. He ensured reasonable leniency in assessment, and enforced a system of suspensions and remissions which introduced far greater elasticity into revenue collection in times of scarcity. He saved the bulk of the sturdy cultivators of the Punjab from the evil effects of the wholesale alienation of their land, which was reducing them to beggary; and in doing so he went over the heads of the local government with a courage which experience has fully vindicated. He sought to prevent the growth of agricultural indebtedness by initiating a system of co-operative credit societies which, though still only emerging from the experimental stage, is probably destined to help in large degree in removing the millstone of hopeless debt from the neck of the ryot. Finally, in the famous Resolution of the Government of India on land revenue policy, penned by his own hand, he administered such an overwhelming blow to the critics who declared that the British were inflicting intolerable burdens upon the people, that they have remained for the most part crushed and silent ever since. Lord Curzon's land revenue policy is one of the brightest features of his Viceroyalty. It tended to ameliorate the lot of myriads of people, and it has never been seriously assailed.

I have dealt at some length with the four great questions, the settlement of which seems to me to be the most notable result of Lord Curzon's rule. To these I would add, as of equal importance, the services he rendered in strengthening the ties which unite India to the British Crown. England has never properly perceived that the link which chiefly binds India to the Empire is not the Government of India, or Parliament, or the consciousness of British citizenship, but a deep and sincere veneration for the Monarchy. Paradoxical though it may sound, such veneration often exists in conjunction with the bitterest opposition to the constituted authorities. To the Indian mind the Viceroy is a "fleeting

eidolon," the Government a vague abstraction; but the King-Emperor, whose image is stamped upon every rupee, remains a remote, but a living and real and abiding arbiter of their destinies. Their thoughts turn to him as the dispenser of benevolence, the remover of burdens, and the fountain of honour. They are perplexed by no doubts about the logic of hereditary rule. Respect for the hereditary principle has been from time immemorial a part of their very nature. It is inconceivable that a Republic could ever acquire, still less maintain, a hold upon India. The imagination of the people demands gratification. They crave, and will always crave, a personal ruler.

It fell to Lord Curzon's lot to be associated, to an extent for which there is no precedent, with occurrences and ceremonies which brought home vividly to the people the reality of the Monarchy. He had to convey to India the news of the death of the late Queen-Empress Victoria, which was received with universal grief. The sincerity of the mourning will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. He conceived and set in motion the movement for the creation of a great Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, towards which he raised a sum of £400,000. He organised and directed the vast Durbar held at Delhi to announce the accession of King Edward, the most brilliant and inspiring assemblage of the kind ever witnessed in Asia. He lost no opportunity of impressing upon India the deep and constant concern with which His Majesty and his revered predecessor regarded the welfare of their Indian subjects. Finally, it became his duty, on the eve of his departure from India, to welcome to its shores, with fitting state, the Prince and Princess of Wales. These successive episodes were no mere glittering formalities. They were conducted with a fervour and a solemn stateliness entirely in keeping with India's conception of the majesty of its distant ruler; they reminded the people that India was at last united under a single sovereign; and in the East such solemnities leave a more permanent

and possibly a more valuable impression than many acts of legislation.

In the second group of Lord Curzon's labours in India may be placed his work for the improvement of agriculture, his development and consolidation of British influence in the Persian Gulf and Southern Persia, his commercial policy, and his vigorous overhauling of the whole of the departments of the Administration. These questions must be dealt with more briefly.

I allot a high place to his incessant care for agricultural advancement, because agriculture is, and must ever be, immeasurably the greatest of Indian industries. The ryot will never become a scientific agriculturist, but he is not insusceptible to improved methods, and Indian agriculture is not exempt from the general rule that intelligent and scientific farming pays best. Lord Curzon gave a very real impetus to agriculture. He created an Imperial Agricultural Department, in charge of an Inspector-General; he expanded and improved the Agricultural Service, brought out many experts from Europe, and encouraged the establishment of experimental farms; he tried, not without some success, to improve the staple of Indian cotton, and he endeavoured to improve the breeds of Indian cattle. One night Mr. Phipps, an American millionaire, was dining with him at Calcutta. Mr. Phipps said to him: "I have been travelling about India, and everywhere I have heard of you and your work. I believe in both. I will give you £20,000, to do whatever you like with it for the good of the people." This sum was afterwards increased by Mr. Phipps to £30,000, and with it Lord Curzon founded the Phipps Research Laboratory which was the nucleus of the Agricultural College at Pusa. On the day that the foundation stone was laid, Sir Denzil Ibbetson reminded his hearers of the estimate that the annual crops of British India alone are worth £345,000,000. If agricultural research only increases their value one per cent., a sum of nearly

£8,500,000 will be added to the annual income of the Indian cultivator.

In Southern Persia and the Persian Gulf Lord Curzon restored and developed the waning prestige of Great Britain, and demonstrated the determination of the Government not to permit any violation of the preferential position which Great Britain has acquired in that great land-locked sea after keeping the peace for three hundred years at a heavy cost in blood and treasure. He brushed aside the absurd intolerance with which, for many decades, officialism had regarded business men in India. By the formation of a Department of Commerce and Industry, by new rules for prospecting for and working minerals, by facilitating the establishment of a vast iron and steel industry, by many other reforms and innovations, he revolutionised the relations between the Government and the leaders of commercial enterprises. As to the overhauling of machinery, he was able to say to his colleagues on finally leaving Simla that there was "scarcely a department of the Government or a branch of the Service which we have not during the last few years explored from top to bottom, improving the conditions of service, where they were obsolete or inadequate, formulating a definite programme of policy or action, and endeavouring to raise the standard and the tone." The process of being placed "upon the anvil" was not always agreeable for those who had to endure it, but the wholesome results were eventually visible in a large increase of efficiency.

To these achievements may be added the remarkable effect which was produced throughout the Administration by the personal example of Lord Curzon. His abounding energy, his untiring industry, his enthusiastic devotion to his innumerable duties, encouraged and stimulated all who were brought into contact with him. There was not a servant of the Crown in India who did not realise that however hard he worked, the Viceroy was working harder. Whether he always displayed unerring judgment in the

choice of the instruments of his policy is to some extent an open question; but he certainly possessed the faculty of extracting the maximum of willing work from his colleagues and subordinates.

In the third group of subjects which prominently engaged Lord Curzon's attention may be included the improvement of the defences of the country, the development of arts and industries, the encouragement of irrigation, and the reform of the police. One unfortunate consequence of the controversy with which his Viceroyalty terminated is the prevalent vague impression that he was not eager for military reforms, and even endeavoured to thwart them. That is by no means the case. Lord Curzon loyally supported Lord Kitchener in his efforts to improve the efficiency of the Indian Army, and without his constant co-operation the success attained by Lord Kitchener would have been impossible. The list of reforms he was instrumental in carrying before Lord Kitchener's advent is considerable. He declared that he would flinch from no outlay which was necessary for the military protection of India. He recognised that there were many defects; it was because he was eager to rectify them that he repeatedly pressed the Home authorities to send Lord Kitchener to his aid; and he never refused the Commander-in-Chief a single rupee for his scheme of reorganisation.

Lord Curzon never lost an opportunity of encouraging the revival of Indian arts and industries, and he gave up much time to schemes for the development of technical education and industrial schools. He largely increased the expenditure upon irrigation, and as a result of the Irrigation Commission which he appointed, a scheme estimated to cost thirty millions sterling, spread over a period of twenty years, was adopted. Police reform occupied a prominent place in his first list of subjects, and the outcome of the prolonged sittings of the Police Commission was the commencement of a process of improvement, which is, however, still largely incomplete.

In yet another group of questions dealt with by Lord Curzon, and not necessarily inferior in importance to those already mentioned, may be placed the encouragement and protection of native chiefs and states, a railway policy without precedent for vigour, the creation of a number of expert appointments, the Tibet Mission, the improvement of Calcutta, and the preservation of ancient buildings and antiquities.

Lord Curzon's policy towards native states, which will be discussed in detail hereafter, was best summed up in his speech on receiving the freedom of the City of London in 1904, when he said: "I have always been a devoted believer in the continued existence of the native states in India, and an ardent well-wisher of the native princes. But I believe in them not as relics, but as rulers; not as puppets, but as living factors in the administration. I want them to share the responsibilities as well as the glories of British rule." He left a deep impress upon the native state, and no Indian rulers who governed their subjects well, and maintained a well-affected attitude towards British overlordship, ever had occasion to resent his close attention to their welfare. During his Viceroyalty he restored to the Maharajah of Kashmir the powers of which he had been relieved, and he settled with the Nizam of Hyderabad a dispute about the control of Berar which had dragged on unsolved for half a century. He raised the Imperial Cadet Corps, and he constantly encouraged and improved the important educational work undertaken at the Chiefs' Colleges.

The railway policy of Lord Curzon embraced both a large increase in construction and greater efficiency of administration. When he went to India, 22,040 miles of railway were open; before he started he said he hoped 25,000 would be completed in his time: and as a matter of fact he raised the total railway mileage to over 28,000 miles. His railway inquiries were followed by many improvements, and he created a Railway Board, which, however, chose at first to work upon lines which did not command general

approval. The Tibet Mission, which was rendered necessary by the truculent behaviour and the menacing intrigues of the Dalai Lama, penetrated to Lhasa and thus pierced the last mystery of Asia; but its results were partly nullified by the subsequent policy of the Home Government. If we thwarted Russian designs, we ingenuously left the way clear for the transformation of the decaying suzerainty of China into direct Chinese rule.

The expert appointments created by Lord Curzon included those of a chief inspector of mines, a director-general of education, a director of criminal intelligence (in reality a controller of the secret service, whose work is at present as onerous as that of any official in India), a sanitary commissioner, a director-general of commercial intelligence, a director-general of archæology, and an inspector-general of irrigation. All these officers have done valuable work in their respective spheres. He was so intensely interested in the improvement of Calcutta that the other great cities grew rather jealous of his devotion to the capital. He did much to beautify the city, and inaugurated a scheme for its improvement which is estimated to involve an ultimate cost of £5,500,000. He said that when he contemplated the enormous possibilities of Calcutta, he almost felt that when he ceased to be Viceroy he should like to become Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation. His work for the preservation of antiquities was endorsed and appreciated by the entire country, and the care he exercised in the renovation and adornment of the Taj Mahal was in striking contrast to the exploit of a Viceroy of long ago, who was on the verge of permitting the destruction of the building for the value of its marbles.

Among other labours undertaken by Lord Curzon may be noted his unremitting efforts to prevent the spread of plague. He visited the plague-stricken centres, inspected plague hospitals, even had himself inoculated with Mr. Haffkine's prophylactic to encourage the frightened people to submit to inoculation, authorised large preventive

measures, and arranged for prolonged expert investigation into the manner of transmission of the disease. It cannot be said that these activities had any very definite results, for plague has to this day baffled doctors and scientists. During Lord Curzon's term of office, the annual plague mortality steadily increased, and over four million deaths from plague were recorded during his Viceroyalty. The cholera mortality, never absent from Indian death returns, ran into millions during the same period, and the deaths from all the diseases vaguely described as "fever" were far more numerous; but these were normal factors, and the gravity of the losses from plague lies in the fact that they are mostly in excess of the normal death-rate.

Lord Curzon further had to face the greatest famine which India has endured in modern times. The widespread famine of 1896–97 has been already explained. The moonsoon rains failed again in the very first year of his Viceroyalty, and by October 1899 he was confronted by a visitation unparalleled in extent and severity. The total area affected amounted to over 475,000 square miles, with a population of nearly sixty millions, of whom thirty millions belonged to native states. In July 1900 the number of people in receipt of relief reached the enormous total of over six millions. The amount spent by the Government in relief exceeded six millions sterling. Lord Curzon threw himself with characteristic energy into the task of coping with this calamitous affliction. He not only supervised the details of the campaign, but also personally visited the smitten areas in the midst of the pouring rains of the monsoon; and afterwards, at his instance, Sir Antony Macdonnell conducted inquiries which finally settled the principles upon which famines were in future to be fought. The heavy labours which the famine of 1900 involved would alone have sufficed to make the reputation of some Viceroyalties.

In August 1903, Lord Curzon announced to the Legislative Council that his Majesty's Government had offered

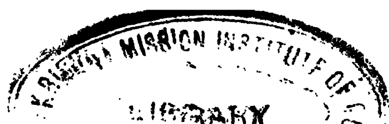
him an extension of his term of office, and that he had decided to accept the offer, with an interim vacation to England. In the early days of British rule Governors-General frequently held office for prolonged periods. Warren Hastings, for instance, was Governor-General for thirteen years. There were, however, only two who had exceeded the five years' term during the preceding half-century, and neither example was encouraging. Dalhousie and Canning both left India dying men. Many people, by no means hostile to Lord Curzon, think he would have been wiser not to have returned. I do not share that view. He had "embarked upon wide and comprehensive schemes of reform" which had not been carried to completion. Had he left India for ever on the conclusion of his first term, he would have departed in a golden haze of panegyric; he would have been spared the bitterness of later years, and might have rested on a reputation thrice earned; but he would have had the consciousness that much of his work had been left unfinished. Duty, and duty alone, beckoned him back, and he could not but hearken to the call. He told Lord Salisbury when he was appointed that it would take him seven years to accomplish all he hoped to do. Even that time was all too short.

He sailed from Bombay on April 30, 1904, and during his absence Lord Ampthill, Governor of Madras, acted as Viceroy. Lord Ampthill was then only thirty-five, and was the youngest Englishman who had ever held the Viceroyalty. During his temporary sojourn at Simla he had to direct the later stages of the Tibet Mission, and the negotiations which led to the despatch of a Mission to Kabul; and he discharged his duties with a thoroughness which won for him the esteem of the services and the respect of the Indian public. While in England Lord Curzon was presented with the freedom of the City of London and of the borough of Derby, and King Edward conferred upon him the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which had

been rendered vacant by the death of Lord Salisbury. During his residence at Walmer Castle Lady Curzon contracted a dangerous illness, and he was compelled to return to India without her, though she afterwards rejoined him, thereby so impairing her health that she died in 1906.

Lord Curzon landed once more at Bombay on December 9, 1904, outwardly alert and vigorous, but with a heavy heart. "I land alone," he said to the members of the Bombay Municipality, who tendered respectful greetings, "to resume this great burden, without the sympathy and the solace at my side that have been my mainstay during these hard and often weary years." The glamour of the task had never faded, the bright hopes of six years earlier were in process of fulfilment, but the strain of the immense volume of work had grown almost insupportable, and the air was thick with the dust of controversy. Lord Curzon's loneliness was not only domestic. He had outlasted most of the colleagues with whom he had commenced his work. Sir Walter Lawrence, the friend of his youth, the faithful and devoted private secretary who had so loyally helped him in his first term, had gone back to England. At the moment of his return Lord Curzon seemed more powerful than he had ever been; he really dominated the Administration and all India. The *Pioneer* wrote: "Never was Lord Curzon's happy star more in evidence than at the present moment"; but, still half unseen, the instruments of trouble were at hand.

The Universities Act, virulently resented because it removed the five great educational institutions of the country from the hands of the cliques into which they had fallen, had stirred up among the "Nationalist" party a spirit of violent hostility to the Viceroy. The partition of Bengal, which had taken a larger shape during Lord Curzon's absence, was presently announced, and evoked the most ludicrous corybantics among the excitable politicians of Calcutta. A boycott of English products was declared in



Bengal, and a movement was inaugurated which plunged the province into artificial and manufactured strife. In earlier years the native Press had been unusually cordial towards the Viceroy; but the more unworthy organs now adopted a tone which was inflammatory in its incitements to disorder and malignant in its denunciations of Lord Curzon. While he was in England a Bombay native newspaper had practically suggested that he should be treated as the Grand Duke Sergius had been treated at Moscow. The atrocious suggestion was most unwisely allowed to pass unpunished. During the last months of his stay in India Lord Curzon was too preoccupied to pay much heed to the malicious outpourings of the native journals, which naturally took full advantage of the undue licence they were enjoying.

At this period, too, the widespread if limited conspiracy which afterwards produced so many assassinations was being stealthily organised, though its existence was then almost unsuspected. As will be explained in a later chapter, this more dangerous movement had only a limited connection with the political controversies which disturbed the close of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. It was really the outcome of the wave of resentment against subjection and tutelage which has swept through every Asiatic country. The peoples of Asia are beginning to challenge and to defy European domination. In India the movement was stimulated by increasing intercourse with the world outside, still more by the dazzling victories of an Asiatic race in the Far East. Its gravest feature was, and still is, not so much the crimes which were its result, as the absence of open disapproval of those crimes among very large numbers of the population. No doubt the excitement engendered by the Universities Act and the partition of Bengal was cleverly utilised to propagate the doctrines of anarchism which disaffected Indians had borrowed from the West; but unrest and its accompaniment of violence would have appeared in India at this juncture,

and would have spread with almost as much incendiary rapidity, if the Universities had been left alone, if Bengal had remained one and indivisible, if, indeed, Lord Curzon had never been born. The times were ripe for it; all Asia was astir; and it was only a chronological coincidence which led short-sighted observers to attribute its appearance to an educational reform and a rearrangement of administrative boundaries, however important the effect of these measures may have been.

The coincidence, however, was marked enough to create much misconception in England at a later date concerning the real results of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. The public were slow to understand that they were in the presence of the beginnings of a great world-movement, and that the hostile ebullitions which seemed so sensational were only the mere flecks of foam upon the wave. Few people realised, or even now realise, that one of the great claims of Lord Curzon to the recognition of the historian of the British Empire will be that by his vigorous readjustment and overhauling of every branch of the machinery of administration, he infused into British rule in India that renewed strength and restored efficiency which will enable it to withstand the shocks by which it may be eventually assailed. Our hold upon India would have been loosening to-day had it not been for his seven years of anxious, largely unrecognised, and still unrequited toil. He made it clear to the people of India that Great Britain is still strong to rule, and the memory of his firm control will not lightly be forgotten.

If, indeed, Lord Curzon was in any degree responsible for the growth of the Nationalist movement in India, it was solely by reason of the strength and solidity of his work. He was animated throughout by an inflexible belief in the permanence of British rule, which he recognised to be best for India in the interests of the Indians themselves. He held, as Lord Cromer holds, and told the Classical Association in 1909, that "it will be well for England, better for

India, and best of all for the cause of progressive civilisation in general, if it be clearly understood from the outset that . . . we have not the smallest intention of abandoning our Indian possessions, and that it is highly improbable that any such intention will be entertained by our posterity." Lord Curzon never paltered with that fundamental issue, as some associated with the control of India have done. He lost no opportunity of making it plain that British supremacy was intended to endure, and he bent all his energies to making it impregnable. To that extent he may have contributed to precipitate the outburst of Nationalist activity which followed his departure; but if that is the case, it is a matter for pride, not for regret, and for praise, not for reproof. It is almost criminal to excite false hopes about our intentions and aims in India.

It must not be supposed that amid the rising din of disputation there was any slackening of work upon the undertakings which Lord Curzon had returned to complete. The projected police reforms were duly begun. The revision of the Famine Codes in each province was concluded. The recommendations of the Irrigation Commission were put into operation. The Co-operative Credit Societies, then still in the initial stage, were steadily increased in number. The principles of elasticity in land revenue collection, previously laid down, were applied in a practical form. The new department of Commerce and Industry was started, and the Railway Board inaugurated. The construction of the Pusa Agricultural College was commenced. The various educational reforms were advanced by several stages. A host of other questions were finally dealt with; but interest in all these proceedings was largely overshadowed by the differences concerning military administration, which eventually brought about Lord Curzon's resignation.

It has been said already that in all schemes for improving the efficiency of the Indian Army and the defences of India Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener were able to work harmo-

niously together. There was, however, one aspect of Lord Kitchener's projected reforms upon which they had from the outset joined issue. Under the system hitherto prevailing, the Commander-in-Chief was responsible for the organisation and training of the Army, and for promotions and movements of troops. There was also a Military Department, in charge of a Member of Council, who was always a soldier of high rank. The Military Member was an additional adviser of the Viceroy upon Army affairs, and it was the particular function of his department to maintain a check upon expenditure.

Lord Kitchener had conceived an aversion to the Military Department before he came to India at all. He proposed its abolition almost as soon as he arrived. He wanted to have supreme and undivided control of the Army, and to decide and direct its expenditure without any of those checks which are furnished in every civilised country. He was persuaded to postpone his proposals, and he did so largely in the belief that he would carry his point after Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty had terminated. The extension of Lord Curzon's term of office disconcerted his plans, and the whole issue was raised afresh upon the Viceroy's return. Lord Curzon opposed the project, chiefly on the ground that the supremacy of the civil power would be subverted. India, he said in effect, would pass under a military dictatorship. A compromise was for a time patched up. It was agreed that a new Military Supply Department should be created and placed in charge of a soldier of experience, who would be a Member of Council and act as an independent military adviser to the Viceroy. A fresh dispute arose as to the choice of the new member. The Cabinet in England did not appear to appreciate the gravity of the constitutional principles involved. Mr. Balfour's Ministry was tottering towards its fall. The question was settled, as I now believe, primarily upon its merits as they were conceived by the Cabinet, but perhaps also in compliance with the supposed needs of a Government which feared that its doom was at hand.

The decision appeared to involve the resignation either of the Viceroy or of the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Kitchener was the idol of the market-place, and his disappearance from India at that juncture would probably have imperilled the Ministry. He was upheld, and Lord Curzon resigned and left India on November 18, landing in England to find that the Ministry and the roof of Charing Cross had fallen.

No controversy had stirred India so deeply for generations, and Lord Curzon truly said, two days before he sailed, that he had the whole country behind him. Animosities were temporarily forgotten, the Anglo-Indian and the native Press were for once united, the civil and military services were of one mind. The new Liberal Government at home supported the decision of its predecessors, but the Supply Department soon proved to be a sham, as it was meant to be. Lord Morley, who had become Secretary of State for India, abolished it in 1909, and Lord Kitchener concluded his term of office as Commander-in-Chief in the enjoyment of powers which are not likely to be permanently continued. Sir Charles Dilke said in the Indian Budget debate in August 1909, that he had "not met any authority who did not think that we will have to go slowly back to the system which has been abolished." Most impartial persons, who have a knowledge of Indian conditions, and who have made a careful study of the question, will endorse his statement.

In the succeeding chapters of this book I shall deal in greater detail with the principal events of Lord Curzon's Vicroyalty, and I shall add some record of Indian affairs since his departure. I shall have something to say in conclusion about the personal characteristics of his rule, his methods of work, and the trying conditions under which it was often conducted. Few people know, even now, the story of the frequent agonies of physical infirmity which had to be borne in secret and in silence. Lord Curzon returned to India, against medical advice and at the risk of a permanent physical breakdown, to complete his task. India

left marks upon him which can never be effaced. I recognise that in public life, as in literature, a man must be judged solely by his work, and that the conditions under which it is accomplished are a minor matter with which the world has small concern; but without some mention of these details the picture would be incomplete.

In this preliminary sketch I have made little attempt to be critical, but it will be my endeavour to present later as impartial an account as possible of the labours of these seven eventful years. I am only incidentally concerned with Lord Curzon's personality; my purpose is rather to direct the attention of his countrymen to the work he did for India. The man himself does not matter; the Indian Empire and his work for it are everything. Had it been possible I would have excluded all reference to the controversy upon military administration to which I have just referred. I would have followed this course, in spite of the fact that I consider Lord Curzon was absolutely right in the position he took up, because I feel that the incident which terminated his Viceroyalty has distracted public attention to a deplorable degree from the great and constructive character of his Administration. But the controversy cannot be ignored, and it must be allotted its proper and subordinate place in the narrative.

Lord Curzon went out to India with great hopes and high ideals. He realised most of his hopes, and he rarely fell short of the ideals he had set before himself. At the moment of his departure, a feeling of enthusiasm in his favour swept through the entire country. No one who was present at the great and historic scene in the stately dining-hall of the Byculla Club at Bombay, will ever forget his last words to India. As was written at the time: "In all the eloquent discourse there was no single trace of bitterness. Regret was there, and sorrow, and some tinge of that poignant sadness that must always overtake a man when the time comes for him to write 'Finis' upon the task to which he

has given many of the best years of his life; but the dominant note that rang through the closing passages of the speech was that of deep humility. The day of battle and of hard endeavour had ended; the last strokes had been compassed; for good or evil, the work was accomplished." His speech, delivered in an atmosphere charged with deep emotion, ended thus:

"A hundred times in India have I said to myself, Oh that to every Englishman in this country, as he ends his work, might be truthfully applied the phrase: 'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity.' No man has, I believe, ever served India faithfully of whom that could not be said. All other triumphs are tinsel and sham. Perhaps there are few of us who make anything but a poor approximation to that ideal. But let it be our ideal all the same. To fight for the right, to abhor the imperfect, the unjust, or the mean, to swerve neither to the right hand nor to the left, to care nothing for flattery or applause or odium or abuse—it is so easy to have any of them in India—never to let your enthusiasm be soured or your courage grow dim, but to remember that the Almighty has placed your hand on the greatest of His ploughs, in whose furrow the nations of the future are germinating and taking shape, to drive the blade a little forward in your time, and to feel that somewhere among these millions you have left a little justice or happiness or prosperity, a sense of manliness or moral dignity, a spring of patriotism, a dawn of intellectual enlightenment, or a stirring of duty, where it did not before exist—that is enough, that is the Englishman's justification in India. It is good enough for his watchword while he is here, for his epitaph when he is gone. I have worked for no other aim. Let India be my judge."

So he passed from India, with head high and courage unfaltering, having shed fresh lustre upon the name of Englishman, and done no single thing to stain it.

II

THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

I. THE TRIBAL COUNTRY

THE problem of the North-West Frontier is one of the abiding difficulties of the Government of India. There are two frontiers in this region, the administrative and the political frontiers. Within the administrative frontier there exists the ordinary system of control as exercised throughout British India, though it is modified in various ways to suit local conditions. It may be said roughly that the King-Emperor's writ runs throughout the plains and among the foothills of the north-west. Beyond the administrative frontier lies a vast plexus of rugged brown mountains, amid which live some of the fiercest and most warlike races upon earth. The area between the two frontiers is about 25,000 square miles in extent, and it contains a population of about 1½ millions, every man among whom is more or less of a fighter. If all the men in the tribal territories could be mustered together, they would probably be able to place in the field an army of very nearly 300,000 men, though not all of equal fighting value.

This lawless tract, where might is right, and the rifle settles most disputes, extends from the Afghan district of Wakhan on the Pamirs, to the borders of Baluchistan. Its southern half is bisected by the Kurram Valley, the only point at which the administrative frontier is conterminous with that of Afghanistan. From the Kurram to a point a little north of the Kabul River, the exact limits of Afghan

jurisdiction have never been properly demarcated, and serious disputes have arisen in consequence. The tribal country is probably the most extraordinary example of a modern Alsatia in the world. Its people are divided into innumerable sections and sub-divisions, which merge on occasion into the larger units of the clan and the tribe. In the north they offer a loose allegiance to chiefs, such as the Mehtar of Chitral and the Nawab of Dir. In the south they are more democratic, and are for the most part controlled by headmen chosen from among themselves, or by *jirgahs,* composed of most of the leading men of the tribe or sept. They are at all times liable to be inflamed into conflict by the exhortations of fanatical priests. From time immemorial they have never been permanently conquered. When invading hordes have swept through the passes from Central Asia to the sack of Hindustan, the tribesmen have either been won over by bribes or the prospect of loot, or have hung on the flanks of the armies to rob and kill, or have withdrawn to their mountain fastnesses until the wave of invasion has spent itself. The rulers of Afghanistan formerly claimed a shadowy suzerainty over them, but had to bribe them to keep the passes open. The men of the frontier heights are soldiers of fortune, who furnish some of our best fighting material. They are robbers, who wander in gangs far and wide in India, pilfering everywhere, and sometimes levying blackmail in lonely villages far away in Madras or Bengal. They are at times fitfully industrious, swarming down to Bombay to work as stokers on the mail-ships, and they then become almost as much at home in the London Docks or on the Circular Quay at Sydney as in the green valleys of Tirah. I have even met them, cheerful and independent and a little truculent, in the very heart of Australia.

These stalwart bearded hill-men acknowledge no law, save only the modern injunction that they must not raid in Afghanistan or in the settled British districts. Even that

simple and elementary order has been rarely heeded in the past, and is still often disregarded. They fight with the tribesmen in Afghan territory, and sally forth in small bands to plunder the rich villages of the Indian plains. Their ancestors were wont to harry the country-side, and they obey to this day the overpowering instinct which occasionally impels them to do likewise. Among themselves, they engage in protracted blood-feuds, and quarrel about their women. They have queer notions of honour, and a wealth of grim philosophy expressed in proverbs; and fighting is the joy of their lives.

When the British annexed the Punjab in 1849, they came at once into collision with the caterans of the frontier. They sought to stop raiding, and sent an expedition against some Swati clans. That expedition was the forerunner of fifty-three others, large and small, ranging from the little band of 280 men led by Wigram Battye against the Utman Khel, to the great force of 40,000 troops which fought its way through the country of the Afridis and the Orakzais in 1897–98. We poured out millions of pounds, and sacrificed thousands of lives, in our repeated efforts to hold the frontier tribes in check, during a period extending over exactly fifty years. We never had a settled and definite policy on the frontier. We never made up our minds about what we wanted to do. We waited until a particular tribe had exhausted our patience by repeated acts of violence, and then we marched in and tried to smash it. Occasionally we gave the offending tribe heavy punishment, but often our troops suffered more severely than the foe. The tribesmen were rarely obliging enough to come out into the open, but fought from behind rocks, fired into our camps at night, and cut off unwary patrols. We never profited by our bitter lessons. Sometimes we built a small fort in an isolated position in tribal territory, and generally had to rescue the garrison from a siege afterwards; but for several decades "butcher and bolt" was usually our only maxim in frontier warfare.

Many experienced soldiers have urged that the only way to effect a permanent settlement of the frontier question is to occupy the tribal country right up to the political boundary. The contention, at first sight, seems logical. Occupation would, however, entail the construction of at least three lines of railway, one north of the Khyber, the second through the Kurram Valley, and the third along the Tochi Valley. Any permanent advance on the frontier without the aid of the locomotive would be madness. The railway is the true civiliser, and never until the locomotive's whistle echoes below the heights of the Safed Koh will the Pathans lay down their arms. Occupation would further involve the making of a large network of military roads, and it would certainly necessitate the creation of a great cantonment in Maidan, the heart of Tirah. It would, moreover, imply a long and bloody war against the tribes, a war extending over years, and likely to cost an enormous sum. We might settle the frontier question, indeed, but at what a price! No one who has studied the records of the Russian conquest of the Caucasus can contemplate the proposed enterprise without a shudder.

The military argument is, primarily, that if we have to advance into Afghanistan, and if we suffer reverses there at the hands of a foe from beyond, we may, under present conditions, find the tribesmen swarming down and cutting our lines of communication. The answer is that such was not our experience during the two Afghan wars, in the first of which we met with a disaster without precedent in the annals of British arms. It may further be observed that we might find ourselves in a worse plight than ever if we attempted to enter Afghanistan while seeking also to maintain a hold over 25,000 square miles of mountains on our side of the Afghan frontier. The second contention is that if we ever have grave internal trouble in India, we may bitterly regret that we have left these swarms of armed plunderers unsubdued. Admittedly that argument has

considerable force, but it may be pointed out that the tribes at present show little real cohesion in aggressive warfare, and that during the Indian Mutiny we enlisted large numbers of Pathans, who behaved exceedingly well. The whole situation is greatly complicated by the enormous influx of arms and ammunition into the tribal country and Afghanistan during the last few years. That is a factor which tells both for and against what I have styled the military argument, which is by no means, however, advanced by all soldiers with frontier experience. I shall deal with the arms question in discussing Afghanistan.

I do not scoff at the advocates of occupation, among whom I was once numbered; but I say that their proposal, however sound it may appear strategically, is absolutely impossible as a piece of practical politics. It would plunge India into an interminable war which she cannot afford. It would stop all expenditure on internal development for years to come. It would inevitably produce a reflex effect of active unrest in every great city in the country. It would, moreover, tax the whole available resources of the Indian Army to bring the 300,000 fighting men of the frontier into complete subjection. The task could not be undertaken piecemeal. The moment our intention was realised, the frontier would be ablaze from end to end. It would further involve the probability of immediate war with Afghanistan, because the Amir would assuredly regard our advance as merely the prelude to the conquest of his territories. The theory of occupation is, in short, largely inadmissible in any case, and with India in its present condition, it is absolutely out of the question.

What, then, remains? Is there no alternative between permanent conquest and punitive expeditions which have often failed to punish?

It was reserved for Lord Curzon to offer another solution of the riddle of the frontier very soon after he arrived in India. He settled the whole issue by the adoption of

methods which were statesmanlike, prudent, and effective. He did not dispose of the frontier question for ever, because there can be no finality in such a problem. But he devised a policy which time has amply justified, he terminated the almost ceaseless warfare, and he gave India eleven years of comparative peace upon her borders. Since he became Viceroy of India there has been only one serious tribal outbreak. It occurred long after his departure, and it was soon suppressed.

II. CHITRAL

Before dealing with the frontier question as a whole, Lord Curzon was immediately compelled, as soon as he had landed, to decide how Chitral was to be held in future. Chitral had recently been a subject of almost passionate controversy in Parliament and in the English Press. The case was a typical example of the manner in which important Imperial questions become the prey of party politics. There is no monopoly of culpability in such matters. Both parties are at times equally ready to adopt similar tactics if their purpose is thereby served. The question of Chitral was of considerable moment, because the state lies under the shadow of the Hindu Kush. That mighty range rises like a natural wall to shut off India from the Russian sphere of influence on the Pamirs. We were compelled to establish visible signs of our influence in Chitral, because otherwise the Russian emissaries would have come through a hole in the wall and intrigued against us. They had already made similar attempts in neighbouring states, once, in Hunza, with temporary success.

The Government of India had for twenty years before 1899 been strengthening its control over the external affairs of Chitral. It had done so with the knowledge and approval of both political parties. Lord Hartington (then a Liberal), Lord Cross, and Lord Kimberley had successively endorsed

these steps, which were also designed to prevent the introduction of Afghan influence into the country. In 1895, civil war between claimants to the Chitrali "throne" was followed by the siege of Sir George Robertson and a small force in the local fort. An expedition was sent to their relief, and Sir Robert Low, who commanded it, was instructed to issue a proclamation as soon as he entered tribal territory. The proclamation was not addressed to the Chitralis at all. It was addressed to the people of Swat and Dir, through whose country the troops had to march. They were told that as soon as the force had accomplished its object in Chitral, it would be withdrawn. The Government of India, it was said, had no intention of occupying any territory through which its soldiers had to pass, or of interfering with the independence of the tribes. The troops would scrupulously avoid any acts of hostility towards the tribesmen, so long as they on their part refrained from attacking or impeding the force.

The Swatis and the men of Dir did not accept the assurances of the proclamation. Sir Robert Low had to fight his way through them, and reached the fort at Chitral to find that Colonel Kelly had already relieved it with a handful of men from Gilgit. In the meantime, the Government of India had realised that if it was to exercise any permanent influence over the Chitralis, it could only do so by keeping a force of troops in the state. In this decision it was perfectly right. Approval of the retention of a force in Chitral is not inconsistent with the objections I have already expressed against an advance on the frontier. The case of Chitral is special and peculiar. It is the only point at which the Indian frontier practically touches Russian territory, for the narrow intervening tongue of Afghan land is little more than a diplomatic fiction. The Chitralis, though bloodthirsty enough, are not so fiercely independent as the tribes farther south, and are more likely to yield to Russian intrigue or Afghan menaces. They are also, in

spite of their one outbreak, less disposed to wage war against us than the men of Tirah; but we cannot trust them to guard the narrow gate without our constant and visible support. No one now expects to see a force of raiders emerge through the Dorah Pass, but as Sir Thomas Holdich has said, "its existence renders necessary an advanced watch-tower at Chitral."

The Government of India made known its unanimous desire to keep a force in Chitral in May 1895. Lord Rosebery's Cabinet refused to consent, but before the end of June it had been defeated on the cordite vote and Lord Salisbury had assumed office. Meanwhile the affairs of Chitral had become prominent in the Press, and a number of eminent Anglo-Indians had entered the lists in support of the decision of the Liberal Government to withdraw. Lord Curzon was at that time almost the only man in England who had recent personal knowledge of the theatre of war, and he had to face such vigorous opponents as Sir James Lyall, Sir John Adye, Sir Lepel Griffin, and others whose names carried considerable weight. But though he fought the battle against withdrawal very nearly single-handed, he had the satisfaction of knowing that his views prevailed. The new Administration at once decided to support the Government of India, and not to abandon Chitral.

Having decided to remain, it was necessary to improve the communications, and a road was made to Chitral. The men of Swat and Dir not only offered no opposition, but even expressed their acquiescence, and furnished levies to guard the road. They were told that it was only meant to afford easy transit for the troops marching every year to relieve the Chitral garrison, and no attempt was ever made to occupy their country. The strength and exact location of the Chitral garrison were left undecided for many months, because the state only slowly resumed its normal condition. In July 1897 came the rapid revolt all along the frontier, heralded by the sudden attack of the Swat tribesmen upon the little outpost at Chakdara, beside the Swat River, and

upon the large encampment of troops on the Malakand heights. That swift and unsuccessful onslaught was the beginning of the largest campaign ever known on the Indian frontier. The origin of the outburst is still obscure. It was not due to one cause, but to a combination of many causes, among which the incitements of fanatical *mullahs* was the chief. The existence of the road was undoubtedly used by the *mullahs* as one of several pretexts for exciting tribal passions, and the gradual advance of British influence in various directions during the preceding five years had unquestionably alarmed the tribesmen, but the explanation of the revolt must mainly be sought in the larger and more intricate problem of Mussulman fanaticism.

These considerations, however, carried no weight with leading members of the Liberal party. In the autumn of 1897 Mr. Morley and Mr. Asquith perambulated Scotland, and bewildered audiences in provincial towns were invited to consider the grievances of the men of Swat and Dir, of whose existence they were scarcely aware. They said there would have been no war had not the Government decided to remain in Chitral. They declared that the construction of the road had violated the proclamation issued by Sir Robert Low on entering Swat and Dir. Mr. Asquith even suggested that there had been a "gross breach of faith," an expression which he afterwards amply withdrew. There was no breach of faith with Chitral, because the proclamation was not addressed to the Chitralis at all. There was no breach of faith with the men of Swat and Dir, because they never accepted the proclamation. The Khans of Swat refused to remain passive, and the expedition had to fight its way through their forces. The pledges offered in the proclamation were therefore void. Nevertheless the fresh undertaking given when the road was commenced was faithfully fulfilled. No attempt was made to annex the country, and the people retained their independence. Throughout the greater part of the road there was no rising during the

prolonged war of 1897, although its southern portion was not open. Chitral, far from showing resentment at the presence of a British garrison, remained quiet and serene.

The controversy was waged on the platform and in the Press for many weeks, and was finally terminated by the brilliant speech delivered by Lord Curzon during the debate on the Address in February 1898. It was the longest and, in many respects, the ablest speech he made while in the House of Commons. It not only answered with crushing force the attacks upon the Chitral policy of the Government, but it covered the whole of the issues awaiting settlement upon the frontier. He sketched those principles of frontier administration which he was afterwards to carry into effect with such signal success. It was not, he declared, a question of rifles and cannon, but of all that men of character could do amid a community of free men. He adhered to the methods of Sir Robert Sandeman, who practised "a policy of mingled courage and conciliation, and, above all, a policy of confidence and of moving about and acquiring the friendship of the tribes." He denied the suggestion that the Swat tribes would never keep the road open. He quoted the case of the wild freebooters of Hunza-Nagar, who had been converted by young British officers into loyal and attached feudatories. "I will stake all I possess," he exclaimed, "that in less than ten years that will be the case on the Chitral road." The prophecy has been fully vindicated. For the last thirteen years the annual reliefs of the Chitral garrison have marched up and down the road and never a shot has been fired. The operation of traversing the tribal territory is always regarded with some anxiety, but the passage of the troops has invariably been tranquil.

One point in Lord Curzon's speech upon Chitral has been frequently the subject of much misleading comment. He said that Russia "has planted her soldiers right up to the waters of the Oxus, and we are equally bound to do the same." The remark has been interpreted as a suggestion

that Great Britain ought to annex Afghanistan and carry her frontier beyond Balkh. Its real meaning, of course, was that Russian outposts were on the Upper Oxus, immediately beyond Chitral, and that we could not leave our own territory unguarded in their immediate neighbourhood. It was another reason why we should control Chitral.

Lord Curzon, therefore, reached India with a very clear idea about the future of Chitral. It was predicted, on the one hand, that he would have to evacuate it within a few months, and on the other, that he would fill up the territory with troops. Neither event occurred. The scheme adopted for the retention of British surveillance in Chitral was modest but adequate. A proposal to build a large cantonment at the capital was negatived. It was felt that the garrison required was small, and that, as there was no need constantly to remind the Mehtar of its presence, it could be best maintained at Drosh, some distance to the south. A fort of small proportions was built at Drosh, and the Chitral fort was at the same time strengthened. The Chitral garrison now consists of a single regiment of native infantry, stationed at Drosh with the exception of a small section which serves as a guard for the Political Resident at the capital. The garrison stands sentinel against aggression from without, and ensures the maintenance of order within this portion of our frontier. The road was simultaneously improved, and a telegraph line was constructed a year or two later. A small force of Chitral levies holds minor posts along the road. A subsidiary feature of Lord Curzon's scheme was the raising of a force of Chitrali Scouts, for guerilla warfare in the event of invasion. The force is now 1200 strong, it is periodically trained in batches, and the men are only allowed to retain their arms while under training. Its efficiency is dubious, because the Chitralis cannot long endure discipline, and they are not a good type of fighting men; but it may be assumed that the Scouts would serve the limited purpose for which they are intended.

I have heard responsible officers express doubts as to the wisdom of remaining in Chitral, because they feel that a single regiment so remotely isolated must be always in some danger. I do not share those doubts, because I believe the Chitral garrison could always hold its own in an emergency until relief arrived. Moreover, the reasons which caused it to be placed there have lost none of their validity. The echoes of the Chitral controversy have long since died away. A policy which has stood the test of thirteen years is in no further need of justification, and no one to-day would dream of regarding either the occupation or the road as provocative.

The episode of Chitral has been considered at exceptional length, both because no question of Indian frontier policy has been so much debated since the last Afghan War, and also because no man had a larger share in its settlement, both in England and in India, than Lord Curzon. It was, however, only a part, and by no means the most important part, of the broader issues of frontier policy which were adjusted during his Viceroyalty.

III. THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

The settlement of the pressing Chitral question was a necessary prelude to an examination of the conditions prevailing on the rest of the Pathan frontier. These conditions were muddled, unsatisfactory, and not without an element of danger. The whole region had hardly recovered from the effects of the war, and batches of troops had been left stranded at isolated points in tribal territory by the receding tide of British invasion. The Khyber Pass, incontinently and shamefully abandoned at the first sign of trouble, had a garrison of regulars at Landi Kotal, whence they could descry through the gap a glimpse of green fields far below in Afghanistan. On the Samana Range, where the gallant Sikhs had defended Saraghari until killed to the last man, there were more regular troops in positions strategically

unsound. Another force was locked up at the farther end of the Kurram Valley. There was a "movable column" in Swat, there were more troops in the Tochi Valley, and there were lonely posts elsewhere. The stations of these troops were arranged upon no coherent plan, but the military authorities seemed to expect them to stay where they were. There was talk of a great fortress at Landi Kotal, and of other expensive fortified positions farther south.

Exponents of frontier policy are popularly supposed to be divided into two schools. The advocates of the "forward policy" were at that time constantly breaking lances with those who cried: "Back to the Indus!" though the latter cry was not meant to be taken literally. Lord Curzon belonged to neither party. He was emphatically against a forward movement, except that he wished to remain in Chitral. He was equally against any procedure which might imply a definite retreat. He chose a middle course, and in doing so may be said to have founded a new school of frontier politicians. Those who wish to plunge into the mountains and conquer the tribesmen still remain insistent, but we hear little nowadays from the party which formerly professed to regard the Indus as the natural frontier of India.

Lord Curzon has himself tersely summed up his frontier policy as consisting of the principles of "withdrawal of British forces from advanced positions, employment of tribal forces in the defence of tribal country, concentration of British forces in British territory behind them as a safeguard and a support, and improvement of communications in the rear." He refused to lock up regular troops in fortified positions far from their bases. At the same time, he recognised that the territories from which they were withdrawn could not be left without any sort of control. The essence of his policy, which he avowedly borrowed from Baluchistan, was to make the tribesmen themselves responsible for the maintenance of order. It was a policy which was already in existence in the Khyber and the Kurram, and the

principle had also been accepted in Swat and Dir. In some areas he proposed to enrol men as military police; in others, where the people were more soldierly, or the region more important, he decided to enlist them for definite military services as irregular troops. In nearly all cases the forces so raised were to be commanded by British officers. The policy thus employed increased the very limited loyalty of the tribesmen, and it gave the men in our service a direct interest in the preservation of peace, while close contact with their officers introduced habits of discipline which were bound to have beneficial results.

It was obvious, however, that these forces of irregulars or police could not be simply enrolled and then left to their own devices. They might mutiny or quail in the face of danger. They might be unable to suppress a sudden rising. It was imperative that support should be always within their reach. Lord Curzon therefore adopted the principle, previously practised upon a limited scale, of establishing movable columns of regular troops at convenient centres on the edge of the plains, ready always to march at a moment's notice to the relief of the tribal forces. A necessary corollary was the improvement of roads, the extension of railways, particularly of light lines, and the enlargement of certain bases within the administrative frontier.

Upon these principles, then, the local defences of the frontier were gradually reorganised. More men of Dir and Swat, over whom Mr. Asquith had shed such sympathetic tears, were enrolled as levies to hold various outlying posts. Apart from the regiment at Chitral, the farthest regular garrison in the north was placed at the Chakdara Bridge over the Swat River, supported by a greatly reduced force on the heights of the Malakand. A light line was run from the main railway at Nowshera to Dargai, at the foot of the Malakand, and it may be safely predicted that the tribesmen will never again menace that formidable eminence with any prospect of success. It is now actually being tunnelled for

irrigation purposes. There were nearly 4000 regular troops in the Khyber Pass. They were all withdrawn, and the Khyber Rifles, raised among the Afridi and other tribes, were remodelled and left to guard the pass. I had an opportunity of seeing some of them at Landi Kotal, and to the lay eye they seemed in no way inferior to regular native infantry. The railway was extended to Jamrud, at the entrance to the pass, and a new cart road was built at the back of the hills to the north of the Khyber, to give an alternative route to Landi Kotal. The road, be it noted, was made entirely by tribal labour.

Southward, on the Samana Range, and in the Kurram Valley, the regulars were withdrawn, except from Fort Lockhart, and their places taken by forces known as the Samana Rifles and the Kurram Militia. A direct road was made from Peshawar to Kohat—again the labour was furnished by the tribesmen—and a long branch railway was made from Khushalgarh, on the Indus, to Thal, at the mouth of the Kurram Valley. The Tochi Valley was placed in charge of the North Waziristan Militia, and the Gomal Pass in charge of the South Waziristan Militia. To describe in detail the changes made would be to plunge into endless technicalities. Roughly, it may be said that tribesmen under varying forms of enlistment now hold, mostly under British officers, the road to Chitral, the Khyber Pass, the greater part of the Samana heights, the Kurram Valley, the Tochi Valley, and the Gomal Pass—in brief, all the main doors of the North-West Frontier. They are supported by forces of border military police, whose duty it is to prevent the incursions of marauding freebooters into the districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan, in British administrative territory. The border military police are not yet as efficient as they ought to be. A recent report declares that they "suffer from the combination of inadequate pay and hard work." Behind these forces are the garrisons of regulars, that for the Chitral road, at Chakdara and the

Malakand; for the Khyber, at Peshawar; for the Samana and the Kurram, at Kohat and elsewhere; for the Tochi, at Bannu; and for the Gomal, at Dera Ismail Khan. The regular troops are cantoned in places where they can strike a swift blow, and they have the advantage of a freedom for training which was impossible while they were immured in hill-top forts. When Lord Curzon went to India, there were over 15,000 regular troops on the wrong side of the administrative boundary. When he left, the number had been reduced to about 4000, including the Chitral garrison. In the meantime, the tribal forces under British control had been raised to over 10,000 men, mostly enrolled during his Viceroyalty.

Of another aspect of frontier policy less is heard, but it cannot here be ignored. I refer to the system of payments made at regular intervals to each important tribe. Lord Curzon, in one of his despatches, guardedly spoke of these payments as "confidential communications with the tribes." The official designation is "tribal allowances." In plain English, the payments are mostly bribes. I have even seen the word "blackmail" used to describe them. Lord Curzon, when he addressed the men of the frontier at Peshawar, said that the allowances were "for keeping open the roads and passes, for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity, and for the punishment of crime." The services thus rendered are on the whole exiguous, and there is no evading the fact that in addition to our military and police precautions, we also pay the tribesmen to keep quiet, just as the Moguls and the Sikhs did. We have always done so, and the difference between the present and the past is that formerly we paid them and they refused to keep quiet. The tribal allowances have the advantage that the threat of their withdrawal often stops truculence. The sum expended is not large in proportion to the numbers of the tribesmen, and it has to be remembered that if we give bribes, we sometimes exact heavy fines.

During the whole of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, the

peace of the frontier was only once broken. The offending tribe was the Mahsud Waziris, perhaps the most savage and untameable men on the frontier, who committed a series of outrages which required punishment. Lord Curzon refused to sanction an expedition, but resorted to the expedient of a blockade, coupled with a series of swift blows at Mahsud villages. The method was not new, for it is on record that at the time of the Mutiny nearly every important frontier tribe was under blockade; but on this occasion it was eminently successful. The Mahsuds craved for peace, and it was granted. They are still in need of a salutary lesson, which may be given them ere long. It is therefore worth noting that Lord Curzon was never under any illusion about the condition of the Mahsuds, but at the close of the blockade expressed the opinion that further coercive measures against them would be ultimately necessary. His system led to a great saving in expenditure. In seven years he only spent £248,000 on military movements on the North-West Frontier, as against £4,584,000 during the years 1894–98. The peace he brought to the frontier has been continued with only one break during Lord Minto's Viceroyalty. The rising of the Mohmands and the Zakka Khel in 1908 was due partly to resentment at the construction of the Loi-Shilman Railway, of which more anon, and partly to instigation from Afghanistan, the origin of which is not obscure. The risings were rapidly suppressed by Sir James Willcocks, and the fact that they did not spread afforded the best proof of the strength and solidity of Lord Curzon's policy.

The military and police measures thus described led in their turn to the introduction of a still larger measure of reform, the creation of the North-West Frontier Province. From the time the Punjab was annexed, the control of the frontier had been vested in the Punjab Government. For many years there had been a growing feeling that the system was unsatisfactory. The Viceroy and the Government of India were really responsible for frontier administration.

They had to declare war and make peace, to decide policy and to direct military and political advances. When disasters occurred, they were quite properly called to account. The public and the Press in England took no heed of the Punjab Government, but looked to the Viceroy to guard and pacify the frontier. Yet the Viceroy had no direct control, and was compelled to issue orders through his authorised intermediary, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. The officers upon whom the issues of peace and war might depend were not his choice; they were appointed from Lahore. The Viceroy might, and frequently did, direct, advise, or admonish the Punjab Government upon frontier affairs, but if he wanted to initiate a change of policy upon the frontier he had to leave the Punjab authorities to carry out his wishes. The most delicate and difficult branch of the administration of India was in the hands of a group of provincial officials, already overwhelmed by the growth of their internal duties, and unable to give either the time or the care which was necessary to the proper control of the frontier.

With the lapse of years such a system brought about inevitable consequences. It was simple enough in the days immediately following annexation, when young officers like Edwardes and Nicholson were flung to the frontier and left to fend for themselves. After the earlier stages of British rule in the Punjab, the methods adopted were less primitive and more fettered. Good men still won their way to the frontier, but so also, in the natural course of promotion, did men who were better qualified for the ordinary administrative work of more pacific and civilised districts. All alike had to submit their reports, and to appeal for instructions, to the Punjab Secretariat, manned by officials who generally knew very little of frontier conditions. Lord Curzon pointed out that five successive Lieutenant-Governors and five Chief Secretaries of the Punjab had, with one limited exception, no political experience upon the frontier. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Punjab Government

usually had no frontier policy. Its dominating instinct seemed to be to evade responsibility in frontier affairs. The Secretariat became a post-office. Every issue that appeared to involve possible difficulty was promptly referred to the Government of India for settlement. The process brought about interminable delays, because the Government of India —itself not always the most expeditious of organisations— was compelled to send back its decisions through the Punjab Secretariat. The climax came in the episodes which attended the outbreak of the frontier war of 1897. The Punjab Government not only completely misjudged the situation, but was entirely unprepared for the conflagration which followed. When it reported the conditions as "reassuring" after villages had been burned almost at the gates of Peshawar, when it recalled the only British officer in the Khyber and left the brave Khyber Rifles to their fate, it was seen that the days of Punjab control over the frontier were numbered.

Yet it would be unfair, in reviewing the circumstances, to blame the Punjab Government too severely for the weakness of its frontier administration in later years. It was conscious that the old order of things had passed, never to return. Whatever measures it might take upon the frontier, the last word lay more than ever with Simla. Successive Viceroys had necessarily sought to gain an increasing grip upon frontier affairs. If the Punjab Government had no definite and ordered frontier policy, it was largely because it knew that the final policy adopted would be only that which commended itself to the Government of India. If it referred every difficult point to the supreme authorities, it was because it had found that decisions were constantly taken out of its hands. If it incurred odium because the Commissioner of Peshawar left the Khyber Rifles to their fate, the local military authorities, who were unwilling to march to the relief of the Khyber, were even more culpably to blame. The Punjab Government had,

until towards the close of its control, a creditable record upon the frontier. It failed at the end because the issues at stake had become Imperial, and could not be effectually handled by a provincial administration. The affairs of the settled and civilised portions of the Punjab had grown complex and absorbing. Problems of revenue administration, the creation of canal colonies, the normal business of a huge and populous province, occupied the time and energy of the Lieutenant-Governor and his assistants. Frontier questions had always been rather outside the routine of their daily lives. The moment had arrived when the creation of a separate frontier administration, dealing directly with the Government of India, was imperative, and could no longer be delayed.

Ever since the British had come into contact with the frontier, the idea of a separate frontier province had been repeatedly suggested. Lord Dalhousie had at first intended to create it at once, because he saw that the dwellers beyond the Indus were ethnically divided from the people of the Punjab proper. It is said that he abandoned the proposal because Colonel Mackeson, to whom he had desired to entrust the new province, was assassinated at Peshawar. Lord Lytton revived the scheme in 1877 in one of the ablest Minutes ever written upon frontier administration. He contemplated the creation of a vast province stretching to the sea, and including Baluchistan. His plan was unwieldy in dimensions, and it was also impracticable because it provided for a dual control by the Viceroy and the Punjab Government. The outbreak of the second Afghan War caused it to be abandoned. When in 1893 Sir Mortimer Durand came to an agreement with the Ameer Abdur Rahman about the demarcation of the political frontier between India and Afghanistan, the project for a separate province was once more brought forward. Lord Lansdowne was in favour of "a single frontier charge," but left India before he was able to deal with the question. The war in

Tirah afterwards made it urgent. Lord George Hamilton, in 1898, impressed upon Lord Elgin that the Government of India must exercise a more direct control over the frontier tribes. He suggested a system of dual control very much resembling that proposed by Lord Lytton. Lord Elgin entered into a correspondence with the Punjab Government, and received a number of replies from prominent officers, nearly all of whom proved to their own satisfaction that the existing system should not be disturbed. Some of them admitted, however, that the only alternative was the creation of a separate province. The letters went home to the Secretary of State, accompanied by a despatch from Lord Elgin, who was opposed to radical change. The question was therefore temporarily in abeyance when Lord Curzon became Viceroy.

Lord Curzon dealt with the whole problem in August 1900, in an unusually comprehensive and vigorous Minute. It was said afterwards that the Viceroy had written the Minute as though he was answering a political opponent. The insinuation was to some extent justified, but there was need for forcible expression. Lord Curzon knew very well the inertia and the positive resistance which he had to overcome. For fifty years people had talked of the reform, but no one had done anything. He was determined to complete his scheme of frontier policy by the creation of a new province. It was one of his first "twelve labours." He swept aside the proposal to take Sind from the Presidency of Bombay, and give it to the Punjab by way of "compensation." He proposed to make a province consisting of the trans-Indus districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan, together with the political agencies of Dir, Swat, and Chitral, the Khyber, the Kurram, the Tochi, and Wana. To these areas was afterwards added the cis-Indus district of Hazara, because its population was chiefly tribal. Practically the Punjab Government ceased to exercise any jurisdiction west of the Indus, except in the settled district

of Dera Ghazi Khan, far to the south. The new province included the long narrow strip of level territory beyond the Indus, and the whole of the vast mountainous region up to the frontier of Afghanistan. It has an area of 38,665 square miles, of which 13,193 are within the administrative frontier. The population is estimated at nearly four millions, largely Pathan, and nearly all of the Mussulman faith.

The appearance of Lord Curzon's scheme, which was cordially endorsed by his Council and by the Secretary of State, aroused a tempest of opposition among the older civil servants in the Punjab. Sir Mackworth Young, the Lieutenant-Governor, complained that his government had not been consulted, and that its elimination implied "a most dangerous doctrine." The reply that the Punjab authorities had been amply consulted by Lord Elgin was not adequate, because Lord Elgin had not contemplated the great scheme inaugurated by Lord Curzon. The practice of ignoring the Lieutenant-Governors, or of only consulting them when it suits the convenience of a Viceroy or a Secretary of State, is very much to be deprecated. Lord Minto followed the same course more recently, when he approved of the proposal to create Provincial Executive Councils, without having taken the views of the Lieutenant-Governors, who were chiefly concerned. At the same time, the indignation of the Punjab Government, relating as it did to a point of etiquette rather than to the merits of the scheme, was somewhat querulous. One Punjab civilian of eminence resigned as a protest. In London Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick, a member of the Secretary of State's Council, and a former Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, wrote a Minute of partial dissent, the effect of which was largely vitiated by a frank preliminary expression of approval of the principle of Lord Curzon's proposal. These ebullitions, though they might have been to some extent averted had Lord Curzon taken the Punjab Government into his confidence, were in any case expected. They did not last long. I have some

ground for expressing my belief that there is not to-day a single senior civilian on the active list in the Punjab who is not prepared to admit that the excision of the trans-Indus territories was a wise and beneficent reform.

The new "North-West Frontier Province" was inaugurated on King Edward's birthday in 1901, the old "North-West Provinces" being rechristened "The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh." The first Commissioner was Lieutenant-Colonel Deane, afterwards Sir Harold Deane, a frontier officer of great experience. He died in 1908, and was succeeded by Sir George Roos-Keppel, a gallant soldier who first won distinction by his daring counter-raids against marauding tribesmen. More recently the province has been under the temporary control of Mr. W. R. H. Merk, a civilian whose wide knowledge of frontier and trans-frontier conditions unquestionably exceeds that of any other civil official recently in India. With the exception of the brief interlude of the campaign of 1908, the history of the province has been one of steady tranquillity and development. Its principal defect is that, as was foreseen by the Punjab Government, its land revenue administration in the settled tracts is unsatisfactory. The land tenures along the frontier are complicated, and need delicate handling which they have only partially obtained. In a province primarily created and manned to handle people and issues beyond the administrative boundary, the ordinary details of civil administration are apt to be somewhat disregarded. Time will no doubt rectify these drawbacks, and meanwhile the province has more than justified its existence. The rapidity with which frontier affairs are now decided, the vigilance exercised in the suppression of crime, and the better and more intimate relations now existing between the authorities and the frontier chiefs and headmen, form a marked contrast to previous conditions. The whole system, in practice and in spirit, approximates more nearly to the traditions of Nicholson and Edwardes. A

special feature of Sir George Roos-Keppel's administration has been his efforts to associate Mussulmans of good family more closely with executive duties.

The inauguration of the frontier province rounded off and completed Lord Curzon's work upon the North-West Frontier. It is not suggested here that he presented a new and miraculous solution of the frontier problem, or that his discerning vision saw a way hidden from other men. Much of his scheme had been propounded before in varying forms, many of his expedients had been tried in tentative and piecemeal fashion. The only part of the solution which was essentially his own—but it was fundamental—was his resolute application to the Pathan tribes of the principles of co-operation and trust which Sir Robert Sandeman had practised with so much success with the Baluchis. Many experts declared that the Sandeman method was impossible among Pathans. Lord Curzon proved that it was not. To him also was directly due the determination never to leave regular forces in advanced and insecure positions. For the rest, his great achievement upon the frontier was that while other men had talked of reforms, he carried them out. His co-ordinating brain pieced together every section of the problem. He laid down permanent principles for the control of frontier affairs. He was severely practical, and rejected the grandiose conceptions of Lord Lytton. He was cautious, and opposed the eager rashness of the "forward" party. He was economical, because every part of the scheme was scrupulously frugal. He had everything in his favour, for the time was ripe for the change, but a man of less dynamic energy might have failed to accomplish it. His defects of procedure were characteristic. He saw only the end in view, and never paused till it was reached. His aims were essentially unaggressive, and it may be truly said that during his Viceroyalty, and since he left India, he has always sought to exercise a restraining influence in frontier policy. His solution may not endure, and he has never

expressed any belief in its permanence. The enormous influx of arms and ammunition among the frontier tribes since his departure has largely altered frontier conditions. But he gave India the longest peace upon her North-West Frontier which she has ever known, and the system he devised is still unshaken.

IV. AFGHANISTAN

An examination of the relations between Great Britain and Afghanistan during and after Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty necessarily forms part of any consideration of the problem of the North-West Frontier. When Lord Curzon reached India, the Amir Abdur Rahman, whose acquaintance he had previously made in Kabul, was still ruler of Afghanistan. Great Britain had placed Abdur Rahman upon his throne in 1880, after the Afghan War. At that time, the Amir was assured that his British neighbours had no wish to interfere with the internal control of his country. If any foreign Power committed acts of aggression upon Afghanistan, the British Government undertook to come to his aid in the manner it thought best. The Amir accepted these assurances, and in return agreed to follow the advice of Great Britain regarding his external relations. He was granted a subsidy of about £80,000 a year. The assurances were repeated and again accepted at the time of the Durand Agreement in 1893, when the subsidy was increased to about £120,000 a year. There was never any formal Treaty on the subject, but the Amir's relations with foreign Powers were conducted through Great Britain. The Russian Government, in particular, had repeatedly informed the British Foreign Office that it regarded Afghanistan as beyond the sphere of its political action. Our policy towards Afghanistan was very simple. We wanted to maintain it as a buffer state. We had no desire to obtain territorial advantages in the Amir's dominions, but only sought to keep others out. It was to our interest that the Afghans

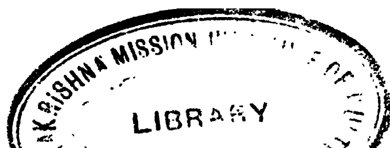
should be strong enough to resist aggression, and therefore we helped their ruler with funds. The country remained practically closed to us, as it did to other nations, and our only important representative within its borders was, and still is, a Mahomedan agent at Kabul.

It cannot be said that the Amir Abdur Rahman showed any gratitude to Great Britain for restoring him his kingdom. He accepted our money, but he was careful to hold us at arm's length. After he had made himself secure, and had raised an army, he very much disliked being compelled to correspond with the Government of India. He thought his dignity required a representative at the Court of St. James's, and was bitterly disappointed when the visit of his second son, Nasrullah Khan, to London in 1895 failed to secure for him the desired privilege. Towards the end of his reign he was convinced, after the arrogant fashion of all Afghans, that his army would suffice to repel a Russian invasion. He considered that Great Britain should help him with money and arms alone. He affected to disregard the pledge of Great Britain to march an army into his country if it was invaded. His letters to the Government of India were frequently written in the vein of thinly veiled impertinence in which the Afghan excels. He throttled trade between his people and India. He intrigued frequently with the tribes on the British side of the frontier. His tacit encouragement of the tribesmen, and his sudden plunge into religious propaganda after the Turco-Greek War, were unquestionably contributory causes of the rising in Tirah. Yet Abdur Rahman was full of contradictions. On the whole, he fulfilled the most important of his pledges, and his policy served our purpose. Though he treated Great Britain with scant courtesy, and sometimes with questionable honesty, there is no reason to suppose that he ever seriously intrigued with another Power. His chief aim was to surround Afghanistan with a ring fence.

The relations between Abdur Rahman and Lord

Curzon's Government were neither very good nor very bad. Under the Durand Agreement he had received permission to import munitions of war through British India, and he availed himself of the privilege to an alarming extent. Some of his warlike supplies were detained in India after the Tirah War, and Lord Curzon released them upon his arrival. The Amir showed no disposition to be equally complaisant about various minor questions in dispute between himself and the Government of India. Quite a number of petty quarrels, and one or two differences of serious moment, remained unsettled when he died in October 1901.

The accession of his eldest son Habibullah raised fresh issues of the very highest importance. The agreement between Abdur Rahman and the British Government regarding the defence of Afghanistan was purely personal. It was in no sense dynastic, nor could it be so in a semi-barbarous country where the death of the ruler was sometimes the signal for bloodshed among rival claimants to the throne. The same qualification applied to the subsidy, which was not a grant to Afghanistan, but a personal allowance to the Amir Abdur Rahman. The new Amir soon disposed of the difficulty about the subsidy, for he studiously refrained from attempting to draw it. The problem of the future relations between Great Britain and Afghanistan was far more perplexing. Habibullah showed no disposition to admit that the engagements between the two countries had terminated upon the death of his father. He insisted that they were still in existence, and argued that there was therefore no need for their renewal. He declined various invitations to visit India and discuss the matter with the Viceroy, his usual plea being that he could not leave his dominions. His demeanour in the early days of his rule was by no means promising. He left a great deal of power in the hands of his brother, Nasrullah Khan, and sometimes took no part at all in business of state. His



predilections appeared to attract him in some respects towards Russia rather than Great Britain, but there was no clear indication that he had any definite policy at all. He failed to maintain discipline among his troops, but professed a childish belief in their prowess. He peremptorily contended that he still possessed the right to import munitions of war through India, and the detention of a large consignment of gun-forgings at Peshawar filled him with anger. His mind afterwards became almost incredibly inflated by the stories of the successes of the Japanese in Manchuria, which probably had more effect upon the Afghans than upon any other race in Asia.

The situation had practically reached a deadlock in 1904, when Lord Curzon went on leave to England. Habibullah would not visit India, he had taken up an obdurate position about the undertakings given to his father, and he did not hesitate to assert in vainglorious moments that he was as powerful a monarch as the Emperor of Japan. It was understood when Lord Curzon sailed that the Afghanistan difficulty was one of the questions upon which he would consult the Home Government. During his absence, and while Lord Ampthill was acting as Viceroy, the Government of India became more clearly aware of the exact attitude of the Amir, which had previously been wrapped in some obscurity. It conceived the idea of sending a special Mission to Kabul to discuss the whole situation with the Amir, and the Home Government, after consultation with Lord Curzon, acquiesced. Mr. Dane, afterwards Sir Louis Dane, Foreign Secretary, was appointed as the head of the Mission. The Amir expressed himself willing to receive it, and promised to send his son, Inayatulla Khan, sixteen years of age, to meet Lord Curzon on his return to India. The visit of Inayatulla Khan, which duly occurred at the close of the year, had small political significance.

There can be little doubt now that the whole conception of the Kabul Mission was a mistake, and it is no secret that

it nearly developed into a blunder of still larger proportions. Lord Kitchener was at that period very much preoccupied with the problem of strengthening the defences of India against the possibility of a Russian invasion. He saw clearly that in the event of a Russian advance the army of India could not await attack behind its political frontier. The battleground would have to be chosen in Afghanistan. He further saw that it would fall to the lot of the Afghan forces to delay the Russian advance until the British troops arrived, and that despite the pretensions of the Amir, his regiments were tolerably certain to be scattered like chaff before the wind. These considerations were purely strategic, but at that period they were regarded as by no means academic. The Russian menace had not then receded. Lord Kitchener was therefore anxious that the Amir should accept British assistance in the training of his army, and that he should agree to certain proposals for the improvement of the communications with Kabul. He suggested that the Mission should invite the military co-operation of the Amir on the lines he had laid down. From the military point of view, Lord Kitchener's contentions were doubtless unanswerable, but politically they were impossible, especially in view of the temper of the Amir. They were eventually vetoed, but two members of Lord Kitchener's staff accompanied the Mission to Kabul.

Sir Louis Dane reached Kabul on December 12, 1904. He expected to remain there a fortnight, but as a matter of fact he did not take leave of the Amir until March 29. No British envoy was ever placed in a more humiliating position. The Amir treated the Mission with perfect courtesy at personal interviews, and his private notes to Sir Louis Dane were extremely cordial. But the negotiations were chiefly conducted by letter, and the official correspondence of the Amir was deftly insolent and overbearing. The Mission was left in comparative isolation during the greater part of its stay in Kabul. Very few Afghans of note

called upon its members, and it was apparently shunned by order. Habibullah appeared to be bent upon utilising the occasion to impress his subjects with a sense of his own greatness. The whole city knew that he had declined to visit India, and that at last the Government of India had sent visitors to him. He treated them as though they were suppliants at his palace gates. It was a situation that should not have been tolerated for a single week.

The object of the Mission was twofold. Sir Louis Dane, it was understood, was to arrange a settlement of the outstanding differences between the Amir and the Government of India, and was then to conclude a Treaty renewing the arrangements which had existed between Great Britain and Abdur Rahman. He went to Kabul with a draft Treaty in his pocket. The first difficulty arose when it was found that Habibullah's mind was full of the wildest visions of military glory. His thoughts still ran upon Japan. Then he placidly announced that he proposed to draft a Treaty himself, and he did so in ornate Persian. The difference between the two Treaties was that whereas Sir Louis Dane's implied a fresh series of engagements on the old lines, the Amir's expressly provided for a continuance of the arrangements entered into with Abdur Rahman. It is not generally known that it was in this draft Treaty that the Amir first conferred upon himself the equivalent of "His Majesty." There was a precedent for the designation, though not of recent date. The last of the Durani dynasty was styled "King of Kabul," and Mountstuart Elphinstone always wrote of him as "His Majesty."

At this stage, which was reached within three weeks of Sir Louis Dane's arrival in Kabul, a veil passes over the proceedings. It was clear that a further deadlock had been reached. It is not so clear now that the Amir was wholly without arguments in support of his case. Literally interpreted the understanding with Abdur Rahman was personal, but Habibullah may well have remembered that a Treaty

between Great Britain and Dost Mahomed was regarded as holding good with his successor, Shere Ali, without a specific renewal. Yet the contention of the Government of India was by no means unimportant. Though the general character of the proposed mutual engagements was never in dispute, it seemed essential to know with whom they were made. A Treaty with the Barakzai dynasty, and not with an individual, might pledge Great Britain to unknown possibilities. Habibullah's rule seemed at that time not very secure, and he was very much in the hands of his brother, who was credited with aspiring to the throne. The governing factor of the situation, however, was the exacting and uncompromising attitude of Habibullah. He wanted every advantage and would concede nothing. The sum of £400,000 in subsidies had accumulated since his father's death, and he claimed it as belonging to him by right. He refused to discuss the subsidiary questions in dispute, and to the very end they were never considered or settled. He insisted that he possessed the privilege of importing munitions of war through British India without let or hindrance. Sir Louis Dane had to choose between giving way to the Amir on every point or leaving Kabul without a Treaty at all.

For weeks the Mission loitered idly—and somewhat humbly—in Kabul, while messages passed between Simla and London. It was understood at the time, and stated in print, that Lord Curzon and the Government of India objected strongly to surrendering at all points to the Amir. Mr. Brodrick, who had become Secretary of State for India, was said to have induced the Home Government to take a different view. He wanted some sort of Treaty, and was apparently indifferent as to its provisions. The end came suddenly when March was nearly over. The Amir's draft was swallowed wholesale, "Majesty" and florid Persian and all the accompaniments. He secured the arrears of the subsidy and the unrestricted privilege of importing arms. He never rectified a single salient grievance brought forward

by the Government of India. He had gained his own way in every respect, and it was not surprising that his farewell to the Mission was overwhelmingly affable.

Sir Louis Dane was perhaps too severely blamed by the Press for his handling of the negotiations, but he was chiefly criticised because he was indiscreet enough to claim that the Mission was a triumphant success. Its real result was temporarily to lower British prestige in Afghanistan to a level it had never reached for many years. The Amir had flouted everybody, and his pretensions had been accepted with meek subservience. Sir Louis Dane was not, perhaps, an ideal envoy, but it must be admitted that he was placed in an almost impossible position from the outset. Every one realised too late that the Mission ought never to have been sent. Its meagre results might have been just as easily accomplished by an interchange of letters.

Two years later, early in 1907, the Amir paid a visit to India and made an excellent impression. When one contrasts his attitude towards the Kabul Mission with his invariable bearing during his Indian tour, he becomes something of an enigma. He is a short, stout man, with every mark of health and temperate living. His face is frank and open and sun-burned, with a ruddy tinge. His complexion is fair; I have seen bearded Italians who looked darker. The expression is good-humoured, smiling and alert, the eyes full and often merry. On his first arrival he seemed rather ready to resent fancied slights upon his dignity. There was some question as to whether he should receive the title he had written in the Treaty, but it was promptly settled by a telegram from King Edward greeting him as "your Majesty." The Amir was welcomed by Lord Minto at Agra and afterwards at Calcutta, and when the ceremonial gatherings were over he took the greatest delight in mixing in English society in an informal manner. He was deeply impressed by the large force of troops he reviewed at Agra, but his first glimpse of the sea did not interest him, and he could hardly

be persuaded to inspect the warships assembled in Bombay Harbour. So far as is known, the visit had no political results, but it promoted friendly relations, and increased the respect in which the Amir is held.

Shortly after the Amir's tour in India, the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention was announced. It contained five articles concerning Afghanistan. Great Britain declared that it had no intention of changing the political status of Afghanistan, and Russia renewed its frequent announcement that Afghanistan was "outside the sphere of Russian influence." It was agreed that the Russian and Afghan frontier authorities might settle between themselves "local questions of a non-political character," and both Governments affirmed the principle of "equality of commercial opportunity in Afghanistan." The Afghanistan articles were only to come into force when the consent of the Amir was obtained. They were, it may be said at once, the most questionable provisions of the Convention. It soon became known that they had been settled without consulting the Amir, and that he was very wrath because he had been ignored. He had handed over the control of his external relations to the British Government, but he had not abandoned his right to be consulted. Sir Edward Grey's explanation was, in effect, that if he had not concluded the Convention at once it might never have been signed at all, and that he could not face the interminable delays which consultation with the Amir would have involved. His motive was explicable, but hardly convincing. Nothing in British relations with Afghanistan warrants the British Government in settling, for instance, the Amir's trading arrangements without reference to him. Lord Curzon, who opposed most of the provisions of the Convention, riddled the Afghanistan articles in a speech in the House of Lords on February 6, 1908. He condemned negotiations which appeared to give Russia a voice in British relations with the Amir, and asked why Great Britain should

have consented to direct communications between Russian and Afghan frontier officials when similar intercourse was discouraged by the Amir on the Indian frontier. I may add that, in view of the difficulty of obtaining the Amir's consent, there appears no strong reason why any provisions concerning Afghanistan should have been included in the Convention at all. Both Powers had previously exchanged repeated and definite assurances regarding Afghan territory. The resentment of the Amir might have been foreseen. He has never given formal approval to the Convention, though both Great Britain and Russia have agreed to regard the Afghanistan section as operative.

The Anglo-Russian Convention placed a strain upon our already dubious relations with Afghanistan which has never been entirely relieved. It is difficult to contemplate our limited intercourse with Habibullah with much complacency. Except during the period of his visit to India, his normal attitude has been frequently marked by studied discourtesy, and often by contempt. His people wander far and wide in India, but he refuses to open his country to English travellers or traders. We are committed to the deepest obligations to defend his territories, and he makes no adequate provision for joining in their protection. He has never faithfully observed the stipulation of the Durand Agreement, and he shows no inclination to do so. From time to time he receives *mullahs* and headmen from the tribal country at Kabul, and his subordinates meddle in affairs upon the British side of the frontier with assiduous zeal. The revolt of the Mohmands and the Zakka Khel in 1908 was encouraged from Afghanistan, and subjects of the Amir joined in the fighting around Lundi Kotal. Habibullah was ostentatiously reticent about these intrigues and incursions, of which he pleaded ignorance, but he cannot avoid responsibility for the acts of his officials. It does not make the position any easier that we, on our part, have by

our negotiations with Russia given him considerable cause for resentment.

The redeeming feature of the situation is that, in spite of the drawbacks I have stated, the principle of the buffer state is on the whole faithfully preserved. Our connection with Afghanistan is not very dignified, but we still secure our main object. There are recent signs of improvement in one direction, for with the approval of the Amir a joint Indo-Afghan Commission has travelled along the Durand line trying to settle disputes arising out of raids and counter-raids on each side of the border. Again, the Amir's rule is much stronger than it was at the time of the Kabul Mission, and Nasrullah Khan, who is now on excellent terms with his brother, is not regarded as a possible usurper. Nevertheless, the position and attitude of the Amir must always remain a question of peculiar solicitude and anxiety to the Government of India. The stability of his throne is probably now beyond question, but his internal policy is not always economically sound. By seeking to turn into personal monopolies every profitable branch of the external trade of his kingdom, he is ruining a once lucrative source of revenue. He has at times found a strong objection to pay taxation among his subjects in his outlying provinces. The Shinwaris, for instance, had until recently paid no taxes for years, and had almost declared their independence. There were at one time grave disorders in the district of Khost. The regular army, upon which the Amir alone depends, is really a mercenary force, and its loyalty is chiefly maintained by the regularity with which it is paid. It is now being trained by two or three Turks. The large number of Afghan refugees banished by his father, whom Habibullah has recalled from India with promises of maintenance, constitute a heavy drain upon his exchequer. His personal expenditure is lavish, and he disburses large sums upon somewhat unproductive expedients for internal improvement. The heavy subsidy he receives is undoubtedly

welcome, and he now draws it regularly. Afghanistan is a poor country, and must always remain so until it is properly developed. The establishment of the Habeebiya University at Kabul, the recent introduction of a telephone system along the Jellalabad-Kabul route, the construction of one or two main roads, the inauguration of a motor service, and the tentative efforts to open up deposits of coal and iron near Kabul, scarcely compensate for the reluctance of the Amir to undertake the development of his kingdom upon a broad and systematic basis. Yet his difficulties are great, for he has to contend against the obstinate conservatism of his Sirdars. His own instincts are progressive. He says he is the ablest man in his kingdom, and I fancy his artless statement is correct.

If the political outlook in Afghanistan is not wholly encouraging, the military problem it presents is still more perplexing. It is always within the bounds of possibility that, from one of various causes, a British force may have to enter Afghanistan. Lord Roberts marched from the Kurram to Kabul in 1879 with 6000 men. No British general would now dream of entering the country with such a limited force. The number would be very insufficient to operate against the Afghans, who are far better armed than they were in the seventies. It would be ludicrously inadequate against an invader from beyond the Oxus. The two routes by which British forces would enter Afghanistan from the Punjab side are probably the Kurram and the Khyber. Of these routes the Khyber is the easiest, the most direct, and the most important. The advance from the Khyber could not be undertaken with less than two divisions with any margin of safety. Another division would be required to hold the line of communication. There are two roads through the Khyber, and a third, the Mullagori road, runs at the back of the hills forming the northern side of the pass. The Mullagori road was built by Lord Curzon, after Colonel Warburton, for so many years the warden of the Khyber, had in vain appealed to successive

Administrations to construct it. I am assured by experienced soldiers that it would be impossible to keep two divisions supplied by these three roads, which all unite beyond Landi Kotal at the point of the steep and narrow descent into Afghanistan; and having seen something of the locality, I can well believe it.

Lord Kitchener, after his examination of the Khyber, was quick to perceive the difficulty of entering Afghanistan from the direction of the pass. He advocated the construction of a broad-gauge railway on the north of the Khyber from a point beyond Peshawar to the political frontier, alternative routes for which had been twice surveyed before his arrival. I will not enter into the confusing intricacies of frontier geography, but will simply say that the route Lord Kitchener recommended followed the course of the Kabul River for some distance, and then diverged through the Loi-Shilman country, emerging on the other side of the range at a point within easy reach of the Afghan town of Dakka. The scheme, had it been completed, would have overcome the grave difficulties presented by the obstacle of the Khyber hills, and would have left the way clear for an advance on Jellalabad and Kabul. Lord Curzon, not without some misgivings, had sanctioned the second survey for the projected line, and afterwards its construction, but urged that it would be desirable to induce the Amir, by a slight adjustment of undemarcated frontier, to furnish a site for a terminus on the Dakka plain. He left India soon after the work was commenced, and while the question of the terminus was still unsettled. A portion of the line was duly made, but Lord Morley, who had become Secretary of State, eventually vetoed its continuance, and the line at present ends "in the air." A suggestion by Lord Kitchener for the creation of a large cantonment on the Torsappa heights, north of the Khyber, was also abandoned. The difficulty of the descent to the Dakka plain was never solved. It is beyond question that the construction of the Loi-Shilman railway stimulated

the rising of the Mohmands in 1908. I believe that as a military proposition the scheme, supported though not initiated by Lord Kitchener, was indisputably right, but whether it was politically expedient is quite another matter. The Loi-Shilman Railway is an excellent example of those issues, so frequently occurring in India and in England, wherein the views of soldiers and statesmen are fundamentally opposed. It is very difficult to say whether the soldier's counsel of perfection, or the statesman's warning of expediency, should be followed upon such occasions. Had the construction of the Loi-Shilman Railway been continued, we should probably have seen further tribal risings, and possibly a perilous dispute with the Amir. We may not want to advance into Afghanistan for the next twenty years. Yet when we move, and the Khyber is jammed by baggage trains, ammunition columns, supplies of food and forage, and all the enormous impedimenta of a modern army, there will be a shower of execrations upon the devoted head of the statesman who stopped the building of the Loi-Shilman Railway.

The final complication of the problem of the frontier is that of the arms traffic. The enormous influx of arms and ammunition among the tribesmen has chiefly occurred since Lord Curzon's departure from India, and it constitutes the principal menace to the permanence of his solution. From the Persian Gulf, and more particularly from the port of Muscat, vast quantities of rifles and cartridges have been landed on the Mekran coast and carried overland to the tribal country. The growth of the traffic has been most marked during the last three or four years. It is acknowledged that Sir James Willcocks could not again thrash the Mohmands and the Zakka Khel with the ease displayed in 1908. It no longer pays the tribesmen to risk their lives in order to steal rifles from frontier sentries. Martinis, which used to cost on the frontier about £30, were recently selling in tribal country for £8 or £9, and

cartridges, which were formerly twopence apiece, could be bought for four a penny. Prices have risen again since, in the spring of 1910, Admiral Slade interrupted the traffic by instituting a patrol of the Mekran coast, and since he directed both land and sea operations against gun-runners on the same coast in 1911. But the mischief is already wrought, and the whole frontier is strewn with gunpowder as it never was before. Nor is the unusual prevalence of arms less marked in Afghanistan. The Amir, while rearming his regular infantry with ·303 rifles, and handing over the Martinis to his militia, has sold large stores of muzzle-loaders and ammunition to his subjects for three or four rupees apiece. On both sides of the frontier all those militant peoples, to whom fighting is as the breath of life, have been flooded with weapons, many of them of a comparatively modern type. They are all races liable to swarm into warfare almost without premeditation. Far more than any external menace, far more than the occasional vagaries of the Amir, the consequences of the arms traffic are the greatest cause for apprehension upon the North-West Frontier of India to-day.

III

PERSIA AND TIBET

I. THE PERSIAN GULF

THE Persian Gulf has a place in the written history of mankind immeasurably older than that of any other inland sea. I believe it will one day be demonstrated that the first dim glimmerings of civilisation dawned upon the mind of primeval man within its landlocked waters. It was the scene of great events, which determined the course of progress of the human race, while the Mediterranean was probably still unfurrowed by the keels of ships. Take a map, and see how the Gulf lies at the very centre of the Old World. For many decades archæologists have been probing the mysteries of the rise of civilisation. They have dug amid the sites of forgotten cities, and in Egypt, Crete, Asia Minor, and Babylonia have laid bare the secrets of the morning of the world. Every fresh discovery leads them farther back through the distant centuries. Their researches among the relics of the Babylonians and Assyrians were followed by the discovery of the earlier kingdoms of Sumer and Akkad. In Crete and in Egypt they are drawing nearer to the days of primitive humanity. No one has yet established any unifying principle, any common source from whence these successive civilisations originally sprang. I conjecture that the hidden key to the dawn of civilisation lies in the Persian Gulf, and that the races whose very existence we are only now vaguely discerning through the mists of time, spread outward from its shores, carrying with them the instincts and the tendencies

which were presently to found great empires. The traditional site of the Garden of Eden communicates by water with the head of the Gulf. The legendary being who taught writing and agriculture and the arts of good government to the peoples on the alluvial plains of the Euphrates delta came up "out of the sea." The present theory that the Sumerians migrated from the North, and possibly from the oases of Central Asia, is still empirical, and not so long ago eminent scholars were denying that the Sumerians ever existed. Terrien de Lacouperie's belief that the black-haired race which peopled China came from the borders of the Gulf is not generally accepted, but it is at least tenable. Every year makes it clearer that the founders of Egyptian civilisation crossed Arabia and the Red Sea. The migration of the Phœnicians from the Gulf to Sidon is an historical fact, and the ruins of their earlier city of Gerrha, on the mainland of Arabia opposite Bahrein, remain untouched by pick and shovel. If this broad generalisation is ever established, it will gather up and focus many conflicting theories, and will shed almost as much light upon the science of the origins of civilisation as the discoveries of Darwin and Wallace have thrown upon biology. The idea was first faintly and very tentatively suggested by Sir Henry Rawlinson, but since his death excavations have revealed much that was unknown in his day.

In more recent eras the Persian Gulf was a great highway of navigation, and must have swarmed with ships in the days before Asia lost the secret of the sea. Its waters were the most ancient of trade routes between East and West. Sennacherib sailed a fleet upon "the Great Sea of the Sunrising" to the discomfiture of his foes. The voyage of Nearchus, Alexander's daring admiral, is described in records many details of which may be verified at the present day. For four hundred years Chinese junks traded to the Gulf venturing to the Shatt-al-Arab, and later to the roadstead of Siraf, or to the first city of Hormuz on the mainland, often

sheltering on their way in the harbour of Bombay. Then came the period when the Arabs of the Caliphate took boldly to the sea and steered forth from the Gulf to the "Land of Silk," to bring back rich stores of merchandise, and incidentally to burn Canton. Sindbad the Sailor was no myth, and Basra was the port from which he started on his fascinating voyages. City after city rose upon the shores of the Gulf and of Oman, waxed rich and prosperous by trade, and waned and fell. The advent of Albuquerque in 1507 was perhaps the most momentous event that ever occurred in the history of the Gulf, and thenceforward it became more or less subject to European domination, though the aggression of the intruders was often fiercely contested by the Arabs. Only a century ago a small British warship was actually captured by a swarm of Arab pirates.

Both historically, and in present interest, the Gulf and its approaches have an indefinable attraction which no other inland sea, not even the Mediterranean, can be said to excel. Muscat, so often the arena of international disputes, is one of the most picturesque places I have ever seen. The town lies crammed into a cleft in the huge grim mountain barrier of the Arabian coast. The harbour is a lake of deep blue, the houses stand on the very verge of the water, and grey Portuguese fortresses crown the heights that command it on either side. The unscalable steeps of Musendam stand sentinel over the entrance to the Gulf. Beyond them, piercing the heart of the wild volcanic crags of the promontory, is the wondrous tropical fiord of Elphinstone Inlet, nineteen miles long, probably the hottest place on earth, a majestic solitude of mountains and deep waters, where the hardiest of men cannot live the whole year round. A narrow isthmus divides it from Malcolm Inlet, a vast sheet of water of the most brilliant blue, fringed by purple mountains, and rarely disturbed by the intrusion of mankind. To penetrate these torrid retreats is to reach the loneliest and most desolate places in the world; yet if their climate were less

intolerable, they could shelter the whole British fleet. Then come the yellow sands of the Pirate Coast, where behind shallow lagoons linger the descendants of the Arab corsairs whose fleets swept the seas, and even menaced the coasts of India, until the hand of England fell heavily upon them and broke their power for ever. Northward over the pearl banks lies the course for the Pearl Islands, and in their desert interior stretches, far away to the horizon, a veritable wilderness of mound tombs, hundreds of thousands of them, still unexplained, and waiting the day when it will dawn upon men of science that in Arabia and its encircling sea, and not in Egypt and Chaldea, lie buried the beginnings of ancient history. At Koweit, the finest natural harbour in the Gulf, still sits in his high chamber, gazing seaward with inscrutable eyes, the aged Mubarak, with the face of Richelieu and something of Richelieu's ambition yet unquenched within him. The head of the Gulf is a network of deep narrow creeks, only partially explored, penetrating into the encroaching alluvial lands, formed from the silt of many centuries, a green and fertile region, where Turkey squats supine while immeasurable wealth waits to be garnered from the fruitful earth. The long rugged coast of Persia is like a formidable escarpment, at the foot of which clings the town of Bushire, the portal of a trade route leading across wild and toilsome ranges. Southward, again, are the deserted ruins of the once prosperous cities of Siraf and Keis, and that deep curve opposite Musendam where lie the islands and the anchorages and the sweltering beaches of Bunder Abbas, which together constitute the key of the Gulf. Bunder Abbas has an evil reputation, and in truth it is a feverish spot; but it has its compensations, and when its sleepless nights are forgotten the vision of Hormuz across the water, incarnadined in the sunset and glowing like a jewel, lingers in the memory. There are some who call the Gulf "dull." Dull! It is peopled with the ghosts of all the ages. There can be no dullness amid such scenes, and even as the Gulf

witnessed the dawn of history, so it may yet once more be the theatre of events which may move the world.

Within the Persian Gulf the influence of Great Britain reigns supreme. For nearly three hundred years our flag has flown upon its waters and on the coast that leads to its narrow entrance. It was flying in the Gulf of Oman before the *May-flower* sailed from Plymouth. We have sailed and fought and traded and ruled throughout the narrow seas of the Middle East until every rival has gone down before us. By innumerable sacrifices of blood and treasure, by the unflinching valour of our seamen, by the lonely and forgotten graves upon those burning shores, by the very merit and restraint of our control, we have earned thrice over the right to keep our paramountcy inviolate. For more than a century we have made of the Gulf, by the force and prestige of our arms, a haven of peace. There is no part of our work in the world that can be contemplated with greater satisfaction. We routed out the nests of pirates, captured their strongholds and destroyed their fleets. We suppressed slavery, and stopped the importation of slaves from Africa. We kept the peace between the pirate chiefs and their successors, and bound them by a truce to refrain from hostilities at sea, so that to this day they are know as the Trucial Chiefs of Oman. Out of that permanent truce grew treaties by which they acknowledge the British Government as their overlords and protectors. We established a protectorate over Bahrein, and special and preferential relations with Koweit. We saved the native dhows from being plundered during the date season, and we maintained order at the annual pearl fishery. We surveyed the greater part of the Gulf, and at the request of Persia we created a sanitary organisation which has kept the plague at bay. Our Residents in the Gulf have been the arbiters in all the quarrels of the chiefs on the Arabian coast, and have time and again averted bloodshed. If we were to withdraw, slavery and piracy and kidnapping and anarchical strife would reappear to-morrow,

just as, according to Sir Bampfylde Fuller, *sati* would be restored immediately in India if our influence vanished.

Even now the task is not complete. Isolated acts of piracy occur every year, and there is probably a small surreptitious traffic in slaves. Still, these sporadic cases are usually swiftly punished, and on the whole our work stands good. We have kept the peace unaided and unsupported. We have sought no peculiar privileges. We have taken no territory. We have held point after point in the Gulf, and given them all back. Our flag flies to-day only on a patch of land at Basidu, on the island of Kishm, and over our telegraph station on the island of Henjam. All nations have been able to benefit by our efforts, and trade is unrestricted and open to all. But if we have imposed a self-denying ordinance upon ourselves, we impose it equally upon others. We can brook no rivalry in the Gulf, and above all, we cannot contemplate the creation of territorial interests by any other Power.

I shall discuss later the reasons which make it imperative for us to preserve unimpaired our paramountcy in the Persian Gulf. Meanwhile, it may be noted that our special position there has been the subject of repeated official declarations to the others Powers. Of these pronouncements only two need be quoted. The first was made in the House of Lords on May 5, 1903, by Lord Lansdowne, then Foreign Secretary, who said :

"I say it without hesitation, we should regard the establishment of a naval base or of a fortified port in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it by all the means at our disposal."

That is our Monroe Doctrine in the Middle East, and we have made many sacrifices to establish it. Our purpose is to maintain peace and order, and to prevent this inland sea from becoming a scene of strife among warring nationalities.

The second declaration is contained in a despatch written by Sir Edward Grey to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg on August 29, 1907, at the time of the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention. Sir Edward Grey wrote:

"The arrangement respecting Persia is limited to the regions of that country touching the respective frontiers of Great Britain and Russia in Asia, and the Persian Gulf is not part of those regions, and is only partly in Persian territory. It has not therefore been considered appropriate to introduce into the Convention a positive declaration respecting special interests possessed by Great Britain in the Gulf, the result of British action in those waters for more than a hundred years.

"His Majesty's Government have reason to believe that this question will not give rise to difficulties between the two Governments should developments arise which make further discussion affecting British interests in the Gulf necessary. For the Russian Government have in the course of the negotiations leading up to the conclusion of this arrangement explicitly stated that they do not deny the special interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf—a statement of which His Majesty's Government have formally taken note.

"In order to make it quite clear that the present arrangement is not intended to affect the position in the Gulf, and does not imply any change of policy respecting it on the part of Great Britain, His Majesty's Government think it desirable to draw attention to previous declarations of British policy, and to reaffirm generally previous statements as to British interests in the Persian Gulf and the importance of maintaining them.

"His Majesty's Government will continue to direct all their efforts to the preservation of the *status quo* in the Gulf and the maintenance of British trade; in doing so, they have no desire to exclude the legitimate trade of any other Power."

It is a matter for regret that the Persian Gulf doctrine did not find a place among the articles of the Anglo-Russian

Convention. The reason assigned by Sir Edward Grey was that, as one-half of the coast of the Gulf is Turkish and Arabian territory, it was outside the scope of the arrangement. The explanation is plausible, but not convincing, for the position of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf must always be the essence of our policy towards Persia. The recognition by Russia of our special interests is, however, satisfactory, because it embodies an admission never made before.

Lord Curzon, long before he became Viceroy, had taken an engrossing interest in Gulf affairs. They had formed the subject of a graphic chapter in his book on Persia, wherein he made the most vehement affirmation he has ever expressed concerning public policy. The words are familiar enough now, but they cannot be quoted too often. He wrote:

"I should regard the concession of a port upon the Persian Gulf to Russia by any Power as a deliberate insult to Great Britain, as a wanton rupture of the *status quo*, and as an intentional provocation to war; and I should impeach the British Minister, who was guilty of acquiescing in such a surrender, as a traitor to his country."

Though that emphatic statement had no official validity, it unquestionably represented the spirit of the policy steadfastly pursued by Lord Curzon while he was Viceroy, not towards Russia in particular, but towards any Power which sought to encroach upon British paramountcy in the Gulf. His arrival in India coincided with the commencement of a period of unprecedented international activity in the Middle East, but more especially in Persia and the Persian Gulf. Russia was steadily consolidating her influence in Northern Persia, and was vigorously and quite openly developing her schemes for the construction of a railway to the south and for the establishment of a fortified base upon the shores of the Indian Ocean. Russian explorers were traversing the

trade routes, Russian officers were surveying the coasts and roadsteads, and Russian doctors were displaying a comprehensive interest in the Gulf which was certainly not explained by the flimsy pretext that they were studying plague. France, with whom the memory of the Fashoda incident was still rankling, was intriguing at Muscat, and was on the point of securing a perfectly unnecessary coaling station. Germany, assiduously pressing forward the Baghdad Railway, was quietly seeking an outlet in the Gulf over which she could exercise territorial control. Turkey was stealthily endeavouring to undermine the independence of Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit, and by threats and actual seizures of territory was trying to force him to submit to the suzerainty of the Sultan. Half the Powers of Europe seemed to be preparing to establish themselves upon the flank of India, and to sap British predominance in Gulf waters.

At the very moment that Lord Curzon reached India, the French intrigues at Muscat came to a head. France and Great Britain had mutually pledged themselves, under the Treaty of 1862, to preserve the independence of the Sultanate of Oman. The foreign commercial and political interests at Muscat had since become almost exclusively British, and the Government of India had conferred many favours upon the reigning Sultan. He had learned, like his predecessors, to depend almost entirely upon British encouragement and support for the maintenance of his rule. Great Britain had repeatedly saved previous Sultans from menacing rebellions, had removed and interned rival claimants to the throne, and had helped the Sultans with considerable subsidies. Without British recognition, which carried great weight with the tribes of Oman, no Sultan could hope to maintain his hold even over the towns of Muscat and Matra. The present Sultan, Saiyid Faisal, was reasonably well-affected towards Great Britain until France established a Consulate at Muscat in 1894. The French

Consul, M. Ottavi, had a fluent knowledge of Arabic, and a decided talent for back-stairs diplomacy. He was accustomed to travel in Oman in Arab costume, and he managed to gain the confidence of many of the Sheikhs. In course of time, through an intermediary, he succeeded in implanting in the mind of the Sultan, an inexperienced and impressionable potentate, a feeling of pronounced hostility towards Great Britain. From this achievement the advance to the cession of a naval base was easy, and in November 1898 the *Journal des Débats* announced that France had secured a coaling station at Bunder Jisseh, a land-locked harbour five miles south-east of Muscat. Bunder Jisseh has an island across its entrance, and is capable of being fortified. It is admitted now that the Sultan thought he might improve his own position by juggling with the rivalry then existing between France and Great Britain.

The paragraph in the *Débats* was not taken very seriously, although afterwards it was found that the cession had actually been made in the previous March. The French Foreign Minister, M. Delcassé, told the British Ambassador in Paris that he knew nothing about the matter. There is some reason to suppose that the French Government was really not fully cognisant of the proceedings of M. Ottavi, though the degree of its acquaintance with the intrigue concerning Bunder Jisseh remains undisclosed. The British Political Agent at Muscat was for a long time entirely ignorant of the transaction, but various other disputes with the Sultan happened to be simultaneously pressing for settlement. He had imposed illegal taxes on British subjects and had failed to compensate them for losses incurred in a rebellion three years before. Colonel Meade the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, arrived in Muscat early in February 1899, to request the Sultan to arrange these differences. Meanwhile the Government of India had become aware that the cession of Bunder Jisseh had in fact been made. Colonel Meade was therefore instructed to

insist upon its revocation, and Admiral Douglas was asked by Lord Curzon to proceed to Muscat in H.M.S. *Eclipse*, the flagship of the East Indies Squadron, to support the demand. Even after the flagship had been two days in Muscat Harbour the Sultan was still partially recalcitrant, and Colonel Meade was compelled to ask Admiral Douglas to take charge of the negotiations. On February 16th Admiral Douglas notified the Sultan that if he did not come off to the flagship at a given time and accede in full to the British demands, he would bombard his palace, which stands at the water's edge. The Sultan came off. That was the end of the French coaling station at Bunder Jisseh.

It will be readily imagined that these peremptory proceedings were not undertaken without strong justification. The justification was furnished, as was at once explained to the French Government, by a secret agreement concluded between Great Britain and the Sultan in 1891, by which he promised never to alienate, or to permit a foreign Power to occupy, any part of the State of Oman. The lease or cession of Bunder Jisseh—the exact nature of the grant has not been made public—was a gross violation of this engagement. That it was so swiftly annulled was due solely to the vigilance and energy of Lord Curzon. The Home Government had apparently only sanctioned the other demands which were being pressed upon the Sultan, though it must have concurred in the despatch of the flagship. The insistence upon the annulment of the Bunder Jisseh grant was included upon Lord Curzon's own initiative. This is proved by the fact that on the very day that the guns of the *Eclipse* were being trained on the Sultan's palace, Mr. Brodrick, then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, stated that so far as his information went the Sultan of Oman had not ceded a coaling station. The Home Government afterwards amply endorsed the Viceroy's action, and *The Times* complimented him upon his "promptitude and decision." M. Delcassé made a singular speech in the French Chamber in which he

said that France had never sought to obtain possession of a harbour, and that the threat to bombard Muscat was due to the "incorrect and spontaneous intervention of local agents." The denial need not be too closely scrutinised at this time of day. As for the British representatives, Mr. Brodrick promptly repudiated the allegation that their action had received the disapproval of the British Government. Something was done to soothe the sensibilities of France. She was given a corner of the British coal store at the entrance to Muscat Harbour, but nothing more was heard of French aspirations in Oman.

Relations with the Sultan immediately improved, and there has since been no serious cause of difference. Lord Curzon sent to Muscat Colonel Cox, an officer of exceptional capacity and tact, who soon established a better understanding with the ruler of Oman. Colonel Cox is one of several examples of men selected by Lord Curzon from comparatively minor positions, trusted implicitly, and given large responsibilities. In due course he was promoted to be Resident and Consul-General in the Persian Gulf. The post is perhaps as difficult to fill as any in the British Empire. It brings the holder into constant contact with many nationalities, and with wild and semi-barbarous chieftains between whom he has to hold the balance. He has to satisfy not only the Government of India, but also the British Foreign Office, for he is the joint servant of both. The peace of the Gulf is in his hands. He requires to exercise both firmness and restraint. Premature or indiscreet action on his part may at any time precipitate an "international incident" of the gravest kind. During the seven years that he has had control of the Gulf Colonel Cox has shown a strength and caution, and a careful adherence to pacific and unaggressive methods, which have amply justified Lord Curzon's discernment.

Another cause of dispute at Muscat between Great Britain and France was happily settled by The Hague Tribunal in 1905. The French authorities at Jibutil had

granted the right to fly the French flag to a considerable number of dhows hailing from the lawless port of Sur, in Oman. The dhows frequently carried cargoes of arms and slaves, and when British warships sought to search them, they hoisted the tricolor and claimed its protection. The owners of the dhows, although they were subjects of the Sultan of Oman, alleged that he could exercise no jurisdiction over them when they landed in his territory. A couple of awkward incidents, in which the Sultan endeavoured to exercise his authority, brought the whole question into the sphere of high politics. Great Britain championed the Sultan's cause, and arbitration was agreed upon. The Hague Tribunal found that all grants of the flag made after 1892, when the Brussels Act was ratified, were invalid, and that those owners to whom the grants continued were subject ashore to the jurisdiction of the Sultan. The award deprived all but a dozen or so men of their French flags, and those who still possess them will automatically lose the privilege in course of time. The warm friendship now existing between the British and French nations is fortunately reflected to-day in their relations in Oman and the Gulf, but it is deplorable that France still protects the arms traffic at Muscat under the provisions of the Treaty of 1862.

Oman is a barren land, with very little cultivation in the interior, and small prospect of development. The date trade is its mainstay. The very great strategic importance of its harbours make it an object of constant solicitude to the Government of India. I can see little prospect of continuity in its present condition. The Sultanate has lost through weakness and internal strife most of its former possessions. Zanzibar has been cut adrift, and Bunder Abbas has reverted to Persia. The sole remaining appanage of Oman on the opposite coast is the port of Gwadur, in Mekran. Even within the state of Oman the authority of the Sultan can rarely be safely exercised outside the two contiguous towns of Muscat and Matra. The day

before I visited Matra the town had been held up to blackmail by a band of freebooters from the mountains. The Sultan is a kindly, dignified man with a taste for photography and a keen interest in warships, but his rule extends as far as his eye can see, and no farther. There can be no permanence in such a situation.

Though Lord Curzon disposed of the Muscat difficulty very quickly, the designs of Russia were less easy to confront, because more elusive. The presence of numerous Russian emissaries in the regions of the Gulf has been already noted, but the first hint of definite action was again derived from a newspaper. Following upon rumours that Russia had obtained an interest in a Gulf port, the St. Petersburg *Viedomosti* published in 1899 an article urging that Bunder Abbas should be acquired, together with the islands in the Straits of Hormuz, and that Bunder Abbas should be made the terminus of the railway Russia hoped to build across Persia. In those days Russia appeared to regard Persian territory very much as she regarded the lands of Northern China before her rude awakening. The outbreak of the South African War seemed a propitious moment for an advance, and a beginning was made in characteristic fashion. On February 14, 1900, when Ladysmith was still unrelieved, and Paardeberg had not been fought, and the fate of Great Britain in South Africa was trembling in the balance, the *Giljak*, a small Russian gunboat, stole innocently into the Bunder Abbas roadstead from nowhere in particular, and quietly anchored.

Had a great cruiser arrived at Bunder Abbas at this juncture, Persia and India would soon have been agog; but the *Giljak* was such an unobtrusive little vessel that no one thought her of any account. The commander professed himself in need of coal and the Russian authorities communicated with a Bombay firm and ordered 300 tons. Every step was taken in the most open and ostensibly artless way. The Bombay firm had a steamer, the

s.s. *Waddon*, at Port Said laden with coal, and diverted it to Bunder Abbas to execute the order. Then the commander of the *Giljak* discovered, to his own apparent dismay, that he could not take 800 tons into his bunkers. He asked the Persian officials to grant him permission to land a portion of the consignment. The local governor had meanwhile developed healthy suspicions. Russian coal, he argued, might involve Russian guards; and Russian guards had an awkward habit of wearing out their welcome by staying an unconscionable time. Another circumstance served to stiffen him. H.M.S. *Pomone* had suddenly appeared out of the unknown, and was taking an absorbing interest in the proceedings. The upshot was that the request was flatly refused. The commander of the *Giljak* filled his bunkers, stacked his decks with coal from stem to stern, and, as a matter of courtesy, the balance was placed in native boats and afterwards deposited in a building belonging to the Persian authorities, where it was soon forgotten. The arrangement to coal at Bunder Abbas, of all unlikely places in the world, and the order for a quantity very far in excess of the *Giljak's* capacity, tell their own story. It has never been seriously denied that the scheme was meant to create a nucleus store out of which a full-blown coaling station would in time have been evolved.

The *Giljak* continued her voyage round the Gulf, laden with superfluous coal. She was followed next year by the cruiser *Varyag*, later by the *Askold*, and in 1903 by the *Boyarin*, all of which made impressive tours of the Gulf ports, but there was no further attempt to secure a coaling station. Meanwhile, in 1900, a Russian mission had carried out railway surveys in Southern Persia, and one party had emerged at Bunder Abbas, while another party actually surveyed a route as far as Chahbar, on the Indian Ocean, only about 100 miles from the Baluchistan frontier. At that time Russia was taking considerable interest in

Chahbar, which is the safest and most convenient port on that part of the coast. Another evidence of Russian enterprise was the establishment of consulates at Basra, Bushire, and Bunder Abbas, which were conspicuously unnecessary because Russia had no nationals to protect, and no trade to foster, in the Persian Gulf. An effort was commenced in 1901 to rectify the absence of Russian trade. A company was formed at Odessa, called the Russian Steam Navigation and Trading Company. It runs excellent vessels four times a year to the Gulf ports, but though heavily subsidised they carry little cargo. The latest returns show that Russian trade with the Gulf is not only very small, but is diminishing. Since the period of the Russo-Japanese War Russian activity in the Gulf has practically ceased.

The Power which has been most continuously and persistently busy in the Gulf for the last ten years is Germany. The aims of Germany have been ostentatiously commercial, but they have been marked by more than one effort to obtain a definite territorial footing. Germany first established a Vice-Consulate at Bushire in 1897, when there were exactly six German subjects in the whole of the Gulf. In 1899 the German cruiser *Arcona* paid one of those visits to Gulf ports which, in the case of foreign warships, have generally been the prelude of some scheme of aggrandisement. So it proved upon this occasion. Early in 1900 a German mission arrived overland at Koweit. It was headed by Herr Stemrich, afterwards Minister at Teheran, who now occupies a prominent position in the German Foreign Office. Herr Stemrich had been stationed at Constantinople, where he was largely associated with the Baghdad Railway scheme, and the object of his visit to Koweit was to obtain from Sheikh Mubarak a concession for a terminus upon the shores of Koweit Harbour. He asked for a site at Ras Kathama, at the head of the bay, and for a lease of twenty square miles of territory around it.

It is not surprising that the request was flatly refused. Mubarak would probably have rejected the German overtures in any case, because he knew the character of German relations with the Turks, with whom he was on bad terms. But there was another circumstance which made refusal imperative. Almost the first administrative act performed by Lord Curzon in January 1899 had been to instruct Colonel Meade to conclude an agreement with Mubarak, the nature of which certainly precluded the cession of any portion of his territory to any foreign Power. The precise terms of the agreement have never been made public, though its existence is now generally known. They are, however, sufficiently indicated by Mr. Balfour's reference in the House of Commons on April 8, 1903, to "the territories of a Sheikh whom we have under our special protection, and with whom we have special treaties"; and by the statement of *The Times* on January 11, 1904, that Mubarak has contracted "special treaty relations which placed his rights and interests under the ægis of Great Britain." Germany has been, in effect, warned off, and there has been no further attempt to obtain preferential advantages at Koweit. I believe I am neverthless justified in saying that Mubarak would like to see the terminus at Koweit, if he could be assured of his own independence and of the continuance of British protection.

Other enterprises with which Germany has been associated are more obscure, and with one exception have been mooted since Lord Curzon's departure. While he was still Viceroy, a German syndicate tried to get a concession from the Sultan Abdul Hamid for working the pearl banks by "scientific methods," though the Sultan had not the slightest power to grant concessions for pearling in the Gulf to anybody. It is said that more recently Germany sought to obtain from the Sultan a lease of the island of Halul, sixty miles east of Bida. Halul is a barren island with a good and sheltered anchorage on the south-east side, and quite suitable

for the "coaling station" which is so much in request. By custom it is the joint property of the Arab sheikhs, and is used as a rendezvous for the pearling fleet; and Turkey has no more right to give a lease of it than it has to dispose of the Isle of Wight. A more definite attempt was made in 1906 to create rights upon the island of Abu Musa, fifty miles north-west of the town of Shargah, on the Pirate Coast. There is ample evidence that Abu Musa has been continuously in the possession of the Sheikh of Shargah, and when Palgrave landed upon it in 1863 he found horses and camels grazing there in charge of the then Sheikh's retainers. A concession for working the red oxide deposits upon Abu Musa was granted by the Sheikh to three men, who formed a partnership. Two of the partners transferred the concession to a German firm, Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co., without reference to the Sheikh or to the third partner, who resided at Shargah. Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co. are the agents for the Hamburg-Amerika Company, and that great organisation is believed to have been the real possessor of the transferred concession. The Sheikh is one of the Trucial Chiefs, and by a treaty concluded in 1892 all the Chiefs had bound themselves "not to enter into any agreement or correspondence with any other Power, nor admit the agent of any other Government, nor to part with any portion of their territories save to Great Britain." The Sheikh protested against the transfer, and requested the British Government, as his protector, to intervene. In October 1907, H.M.S. *Lapwing* towed to the island a number of sailing boats containing 300 armed followers of the Sheikh of Shargah, and the men working the oxide deposits were removed and conveyed to Lingah. The matter was made the subject of an official German protest, but the concession was cancelled.

The recital of occurrences of this kind may seem trivial. It has more than once fallen to my lot, in remote parts of the world, to contemplate International Incidents upon the

spot, and it has always struck me at the time that people would be less disposed to spell them in capital letters if they saw how petty and ludicrous their actual characteristics generally are. Yet they are not petty in their possibilities. The smart French Consul with the lease of a deserted harbour in his pocket, Herr Stemrich, in the bare audience chamber of Mubarak, persuasively discussing a strip of sandy foreshore, the Russian naval officer asking leave to dump down coal on Bunder Abbas beach, the raddle-streaked half-clad men toiling on a rocky islet in the midst of the seas, were all instruments of the subtle policy of great nations. If we remember the Morocco affair of 1905, and the disastrous war it nearly brought about, we shall not deem these things trivial so long as governments fish in troubled waters.

It remains to be noted that for the last five years a vessel of the Hamburg-Amerika line has visited the Gulf every month, but Germany has acquired very little trade except at Basra, where the imports of German goods are steadily increasing.

Turkey was another Power which gave a great deal of very definite trouble in the Gulf during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. She repeatedly endeavoured to obtain possession of Koweit, over which she claimed a vague sort of suzerainty. The Turks have long sought to make fresh conquests in the Gulf, and so far back as the forties tried to secure the allegiance of Bahrein. There is reason to suppose, however, that their eagerness to seize Koweit during the early years of Lord Curzon's rule in India was due to the belief that the harbour was the only possible terminus for the Baghdad Railway.

Reams have been written about the basis of the Turkish claims to Koweit. The very origin of the Arabs of Koweit is disputed. Colonel Pelly, a former resident in the Persian Gulf, declared that they came from Um Kasr, at the head of the Khor Abdullah, 250 years ago; but the Bombay Government Records, and the memoirs of Midhat Pasha,

alike state that they came from Nejd, and I believe the latter theory is correct. The statements in the Bombay records about their relations with the Turks are rather contradictory. It is fairly clear that throughout the eighteenth century the Sheikhs of Koweit were entirely independent. Sir Harford Brydges, afterwards British Minister to Persia, relates that in 1792 the British factory at Basra was removed to Koweit in consequence of the ill-behaviour of the Turkish officials. He also says that the Sheikh of Koweit sheltered the rebel chief of the Montefik Arabs, and flatly refused to give him up, whereupon the Vali of Baghdad remarked: "After all, I regard it as a great happiness to have, in case of a rainy day, a person of the temper of the Sheikh of Grain (Koweit) so near me." Brydges lived at Koweit, and his testimony is indisputable. In 1829 Captain Brucks of the Indian Navy wrote that the Sheikh "acknowledged the authority of the Porte," and paid a tribute of forty bags of rice and 400 *frazils* of dates annually. In 1845 Lieutenant Kemball reported that for twenty years Koweit had been "considered" as "closely connected" with the Pashalik of Baghdad. The Koweit vessels flew the Turkish flag, and the Sheikh received annually 200 *karahs* of dates (equivalent to 4000 crowns), in return for which he was bound to protect Basra from foreign aggression. There is not much suggestion of suzerainty or tribute in this statement. About the same time Lieutenant Kemball made another report in which he said that the inhabitants of Koweit "acknowledge a nominal dependence to the Turkish Government." In 1853 Lieutenant Disbrowe stated that the Sheikh had "placed himself under the guardianship of the Porte." Colonel Pelly, who visited Koweit in 1863 and 1865, states that the Sheikh received annually "a complimentary present of dates from Basra, in token of suzerainty and for the supposed protection of the mouths of the Basra river." There is again very little implication of tribute in this assertion. Palgrave, not a very trustworthy witness, as he never went to Koweit,

wrote in 1868 that the Sheikh had "refused the demands of tribute and submission" made by the Vali of Baghdad. Midhat Pasha, who was Vali of Baghdad in 1869–70, states in the memoirs edited by his son that the people of Koweit had successfully resisted all attempts to bring them within Turkish jurisdiction, and that they had maintained their "practical independence." He claims to have added their territory to the vilayet of Baghdad with their consent, but as he makes a similar but quite illusory statement about Bahrein, the allegation that he included Koweit within the dominions of the Sultan hardly commands acceptance.

My own view, after examining much more evidence than is here recorded, is that the suzerainty of the Sultan over Koweit was never more than a "polite fiction." Midhat Pasha's admission probably describes the situation that existed all last century. Rulers who were able to protect a Turkish city in return for payment were not likely to brook any serious exercise of authority by the distant potentate of Constantinople; but they doubtless tendered the Sultan that ill-defined though tangible respect which most Mussulman magnates proffer to one who, whether he be Khalifa or not, is still the greatest monarch in Islam. Mubarak's own attitude is not difficult to understand. He wishes to preserve his own independence, and to enjoy the protection of British warships in case of need; but he knows the mutability of human things, and prefers to keep on good terms with his Turkish neighbours so far as is possible. He is well aware that differences with the Sultan do him harm in the eyes of Mussulmans, and when he came into possession of Koweit in 1896 he even tried, by distributing bribes at Constantinople, to buy the recognition of Abdul Hamid. He has the best of reasons for wishing to preserve Turkish friendship, because he owns date groves near Fao, in Turkish territory, which bring him in £4000 a year. He therefore thinks it good policy to have a foot in each camp. He gladly seeks the aid of British bluejackets when his capital

is menaced, but he flies the Turkish flag as a cheap and meaningless compliment. There is no doubt about the flag, for when he received me a huge Crescent and Star was floating over his house. His own explanation, though not made to me, was that he flew it because it was the emblem of the Mussulman faith; and further, that when his ships visited foreign harbours, it was a convenience for them to carry a flag which was known and recognised. It is probable that the custom is really a survival of the days when the vessels of Koweit sailed forth to protect Basra from the attacks of the predatory tribes of the Euphrates delta.

I have gone somewhat closely into the question of the Turkish claims of suzerainty over Koweit, because we have by no means heard the last of them. It is more than doubtful now whether Koweit will ever become the commercial terminus of the Baghdad Railway. That destiny is clearly reserved for Basra, and the bar at the mouth of the Shatt-al-Arab can be easily dredged. But even under the new dispensation Turkey has not ceased to make advances, sometimes cordial, sometimes menacing, to Koweit. In 1909 pressure was placed upon Mubarak by the cancellation, on the pretext that he was not a Turkish subject, of large purchases of land which he had made in Mesopotamia. Considering how much the Young Turks owe to the unswerving friendship of Great Britain during the revolution, the manner in which they have permitted their representatives in the vilayets of Baghdad and Basra to intrigue against Koweit savours of rank ingratitude.

While Lord Curzon was Viceroy these intrigues, by direction of Abdul Hamid and, as is believed, at the instigation of Germany, took a far more definite shape. In 1900 Mubarak, who has great influence with the rulers of Central Arabia, plunged boldly into the rivalries between the great families of Ibn Rashid and Ibn Saud, and led an army into the interior. He was marching to the support of Ibn Saud,

and after more than one victory was ambushed in a ravine, and so badly defeated that when the remnants of his force returned to Koweit some of his men were riding three on a horse. Abdul Hamid immediately took advantage of Mubarak's plight. In 1901 a decrepit Turkish corvette, packed with troops, steamed into Koweit Harbour, and its commander blandly prepared to take possession of the town. Lord Curzon was fully acquainted with the projected plot, and with the sanction of the Home Government had issued explicit directions to the British naval authorities to prevent the seizure of Koweit. The corvette found the inevitable British cruiser awaiting her, and a British naval officer, Captain Pears, said a few plain words which induced the Turks to withdraw in considerable haste. The Turkish Government afterwards had the effrontery to inform the Foreign Office that the vessel carried no troops at all. Towards the end of the year the corvette reappeared, bearing a high Turkish official, who carried an extremely threatening message from the Sultan to Mubarak. On that occasion another British naval officer, Captain Simons, whose ship was at Koweit, intervened upon his own responsibility—for instructions had not reached him—and at his bidding Mubarak ordered the Sultan's envoy to depart. Those who only see the Royal Navy at Spithead or Portland hardly realise the difficult duties and serious responsibilities which naval officers sometimes have to undertake at a moment's notice in distant waters; yet I can only recall one naval officer who has been decorated for services in the Gulf. The Turks were not deterred from making mischief, although twice driven back by the sight of British guns. They incited Ibn Rashid to move on Koweit, which he did with great alacrity. The close of the year found three British warships in the harbour, a British force with light guns in the fort of Jehara, eighteen miles inland, and British bluejackets manning hastily prepared entrenchments outside the town. Clouds of Ibn Rashid's horsemen hovered near

for some time, but the task was too formidable for them, and eventually they marched back to Central Arabia. The last definite attempt to seize Koweit was made some months later by Mubarak's nephews, assuredly with Turkish cognisance. They left the Shatt-al-Arab, where they were in exile, with a fleet of boats, which was promptly chased and dispersed by H.M.S. *Lapwing*.

The next Turkish move was more insidious. Almost before the menace of Ibn Rashid had disappeared, small forces of Turkish troops began to occupy posts in territory claimed by Mubarak. The Sheikh alleges that his jurisdiction extends northward as far as Safwan, twenty miles north-west of the Khor Abdullah. Early in 1902 the Turks occupied Safwan, and also Um Kasr, where there is a fort built by Mubarak's grandfather; a month later they established a post on Bubiyan Island, which indisputably belongs to Mubarak; and two months afterwards they were found to have seized an island in Musalamiya Bay, about 180 miles south of Koweit, at the southern extremity of the territories claimed by the Sheikh. The reason of this renewed activity probably was that it had been discovered that the deep narrow inlets of Khor Abdullah and Khor Zobeir, at the back of Bubiyan Island, might form alternative termini for the Baghdad Railway. It is known that Lord Curzon, who exercised the utmost vigilance regarding affairs at the head of the Gulf, protested very strongly against these acts of unprovoked aggression. But the Turkish outposts remained long after his departure, and, I understand, are still there, so it can only be assumed that the Home Government did not support the Viceroy's representations. Mubarak made an ineffectual response by sending a small force to occupy Hagaija, at the northern extremity of the bay of Koweit, close by the entrance to the Khor Sabiya. Great Britain is said to have informed the Porte that Mubarak's rights are not regarded as prejudiced by the Turkish occupation; but the reluctance of the Foreign Office to interfere is not in

accord with the definite though general promises which we made to Mubarak in 1899.

Nevertheless, Mubarak is far stronger now than he has ever been. Koweit is growing rapidly, and has spread far outside its old walls. Its trade is steadily increasing, and the Sheikh is waxing rich. He is reputed to be able to put between ten and fifteen thousand fighting men in the field. He has bought a yacht, and often goes to stay with Sheikh Khazaal, the powerful Arab ruler of Mohammerah, in Persia, with whom he is on excellent terms. When Lord Curzon visited him and gave him a sword of honour, he described himself as having become "a military officer of the British Empire." It may have been a phrase more suitable for "the languorous Orient's jewelled ear," but it was probably sincerely meant. Yet the future of Koweit is by no means free from uncertainty, and we cannot afford to relax the watch we maintain over it.

The territory of Mubarak was not the only scene of Turkish aggrandisement. Within the last thirty or forty years the Turks have encroached along the shores of El Hasa, and in the promontory of El Katar, on the Arabian coast of the Gulf. Great Britain has never recognised the Turkish seizure of El Katar, and the Turks are so weak there that they do not interfere with the civil administration. The solitary battalion at Bida hardly dares to venture outside the gates of the town. Yet throughout Lord Curzon's stay in India the attitude of the Turkish officials in these regions, their efforts to intrude along the Pirate Coast, and the acts of piracy committed under the shelter of their nominal rule, caused constant trouble and anxiety to the British authorities. The best thing that could happen to Eastern Arabia is for the Turks to withdraw from it altogether. They do no good, they oppress the people in the oases, there is more than a suspicion that their subordinate officials encourage piracy, and their laxity constantly permits the Bedouins of the desert to attack the subjects of

the Sheikh of Bahrein. Into the complicated politics of Central Arabia, which also received close attention during Lord Curzon's administration, I do not propose to enter. They constitute a long and romantic story, and their consequences affect very considerably the situation on the Arabian side of the Gulf; but it is a long time since Great Britain intervened in them.

The islands of Bahrein, which lie near El Katar in a deep bight of the Gulf, were the scene of continual unrest during Lord Curzon's time. British interests in Bahrein are not only based upon the early treaty of maritime peace between the Trucial Chiefs, among whom the then ruler of Bahrein was included. They are greatly strengthened by an agreement of 1880, in which the Sheikh undertook to abstain from entering into negotiations with any foreign Powers or from receiving their agents without British consent; and by a further undertaking concluded in 1892, in which he pledged himself not to cede, lease, or mortgage any part of his territories to any other Government than the British. Turkey has now abandoned her indefensible pretensions to suzerainty over Bahrein; but Persia, on the strength of her ancient capture of the islands from the Portuguese, still affects to regard the people of Bahrein as her subjects when they cross to Bushire. Sheikh Isa, the present ruler of Bahrein, was placed in control by the British in 1869, when he was a young lad of 20. He has not been successful in his rule. He muddles his finances, oppresses his people, fails to suppress the traffic in slaves, quarrels with his relatives (who are certainly truculent persons), and handles his customs with conspicuous inefficiency. The troubles of Bahrein have at present small international importance; but owing to riots in 1904 which Sheikh Isa failed to punish, Lord Curzon was compelled to order the presentation of an ultimatum. Foreigners had been assaulted, and other Governments were pressing for redress. Colonel Cox arrived off Manamah with three warships in February 1905, and

the British demands were duly conceded within the prescribed twenty-four hours. Since that time Sheikh Isa, who seemed to me a mild and grave and rather careworn old man, has been more mindful of his obligations. Great Britain usually confines its intervention at Bahrein to questions of external relations, but constantly presses upon the Sheikh the urgent need for internal reforms. The exercise of British authority ought to be placed on a more definite footing.

Bahrein has a world-wide interest as the centre of the Gulf pearl trade. In good years it sends to Paris and New York and London, by way of Bombay and Surat, a million pounds worth of pearls. The pearl bank practically extends for more than half the length of the western side of the Gulf, commencing near Abu Musa, opposite Shargah, curving round to the island of Halul, then passing near El Katar, and finally terminating at a point near Musalamiya, where the territories of the Sheikh of Koweit begin. Very little of the bank lies in territorial waters, and therefore the right to fish upon it raises a rather nice question in international law. The pearl fisheries have been worked for centuries by the various Arab communities on the western shores of the Gulf, who may be said to have acquired a prescriptive right in them. A British gunboat polices the bank during the fishery season, and preserves order among the pearling dhows. Various enterprising persons of British, Indian, and other nationalities, who have sought to participate, have all been warned off by the British Government. Yet attempts are still projected from time to time, and only last year there was a lawsuit at Marseilles between two persons who had quarrelled about the financing of an expedition to the Gulf in search of pearls. The question, however, really settles itself. I should be sorry to go pearling amid a horde of retired pirates unless I had an escort of a squadron of cruisers.

The Persian coast of the Gulf, other than Bunder Abbas, presents fewer questions of stirring interest, though the

issues involved, connected as they are with the whole problem of the future of Persia, are of deep significance. Chief among these is the situation created by the peculiar position of Sheikh Khazaal, who resides at Mohammerah, at the junction of the Karun and the Shatt-al-Arab, and who controls a good deal of the Karun Valley and the adjacent regions. Sheikh Khazaal is an exceedingly able Arab and the head of a tribe which has long been resident in Persian Arabistan. A large proportion of his people are Arabs, though some are Persians. He is wealthy, and has already shown himself able to mobilise 25,000 cavalry and infantry in some operations against turbulent tribes. He renders nominal fealty to the Shah, possesses a Persian title, married a Persian princess, flies the Persian flag, and tries to keep on good terms with Teheran; but he levies his own taxes, maintains his own troops, and in practice is more than semi-independent. Since the weakening of the Persian central authority he stands more than ever alone, and he is in constant fear of Turkish aggression. That is probably the reason of his intimate relations with Mubarak. He is a warm friend of the British, and often looks to them for advice and support; and it fell to Lord Curzon's lot not only to adjust his serious quarrel with the Persian Government about customs administration, but also to initiate and develop an excellent understanding between him and Great Britain. One result of this friendship was that the Government of India, with the approval of Persia, deputed a capable Punjab officer to assist Sheikh Khazaal in a scheme of irrigation which he proposes to undertake on the Karun River. The efforts of Germany to induce the Teheran authorities to grant an irrigation concession within the Sheikh's territories were thereby frustrated. Had the Persian Government been foolish enough to give a concession, which it had probably no right to grant, and certainly no power to enforce, an armed revolt at Mohammerah would have inevitably followed. The policy of Great

Britain, however, at any rate during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, was always directed towards encouraging Sheikh Khazaal to show due respect to the Shah and his advisers.

The town of Bushire, the principal port of Persia, and the headquarters of the British Resident in the Gulf, was fairly quiet throughout Lord Curzon's period of office, except for a little playful shooting at the Residency by the Tangistanis, a disorderly tribe which has frequently given trouble. More recently the trade of Bushire has been almost ruined by the chaotic condition of Southern Persia, the insecurity of the trade-routes, and the failure of numbers of Persian merchants. Bushire is in any case one of the worst ports in the world. Even under the most favourable conditions ships still have to lie at least three miles from the shore. It has no wharves or piers, and very little semblance of a natural harbour. The mule track to Shiraz, by which all merchandise is carried inland, winds amid precipitous heights. Bushire is not, and never can be, a satisfactory outlet for the trade of Southern Persia. If the country had proper communications, trade would probably centre at Bunder Abbas, in spite of its terrific heat.

Lingah, the next port along the coast, was seized in 1898 by an Arab sheikh who had hereditary claims to its control. The Persians ejected the Arab in 1899 by a treacherous expedient; but though Lord Curzon sent a gunboat to protect British subjects, no attempt was made to intervene in the quarrel. In the confusion which followed, much of the trade of Lingah went to Debai, on the Pirate Coast, but it is now drifting back.

The customs administration, which has been principally in the hands of Belgians since 1898, caused endless difficulties throughout the Persian coast in the earlier years of Lord Curzon's control. The Belgian officials were honest, but wont to enmesh themselves and the unhappy traders in interminable folds of red tape. They owed the creation of their service to Russia, and did not forget it, while they disliked

the paramountcy of Great Britain in the Gulf. It would be unfair to say that they became Russian agents, but they dabbled a good deal in politics. They tried quite unwarrantably to seize certain islands in the middle of the Gulf, all of which belong to the Sheikh of Shargah. They hoisted the Persian flag upon the Two Tambs and on Abu Musa. On the island of Sirri the Persian flag was first raised in 1887. The Sheikh of Shargah protested, but nothing was done to recover possession for him, although 100 of his people were living there. That was during an interlude when the Government of India was inclined to forget its responsibilities in the Gulf. In 1904 a Belgian customs officer emphasised the Persian possession of Sirri by hoisting more flags, until the island was radiant with bunting. Lord Curzon insisted on the Persian flags being hauled down on the Two Tambs and on Abu Musa, which was done; but the Persian claim to Sirri is still in dispute. Of late the Belgian officials have confined themselves to their normal duties, and are on much better terms both with the British representatives and with the commercial communities.

So far little has been said of the active steps taken by Lord Curzon to strengthen and develop the British position in the Gulf. He had not only to resist and overcome the attacks made upon it from all quarters, but he had also to devise measures to ensure that in future it could not be assailed with any prospect of success. The expedients he adopted were numerous and effective. The naval importance of Elphinstone Inlet was recognised. Great Britain had received a grant of a tiny islet in the fiord, known as Telegraph Island, and had occupied it from 1864 to 1868, during which time the Gulf cable was carried across the Musendam Peninsula. Possession of this island was resumed in 1904, and a flagstaff was erected to denote British rights. When the cable was diverted from Musendam in 1868, it was taken to the island of Henjam, where a telegraph station was erected with the consent of the Persian Govern-

ment. The station remained there until 1882, when improvements in ocean telegraphy rendered the reinforcing current from Henjam unnecessary. A direct cable was laid from Jask to Bushire, and Henjam was abandoned. The concession still existed, however, and Lord Curzon utilised it to rebuild the telegraph station on Henjam. A cable was landed there, and was afterwards linked up with Bunder Abbas, though the Bunder Abbas line may become the property of the Persian Government if it pays the cost of construction. The Henjam station carried with it an *enclave* of two square miles of land, and considering the strategical importance of the islands in the Straits of Hormuz, its resumption is of considerable value. The station serves a useful telegraphic purpose, but it is also a little watch-tower against aggression, and it overlooks an excellent anchorage between Henjam and Deristan Bay, in Kishm. Henjam is a lonely spot. When I visited it the two telegraph operators had not seen a white man for five months, and were so unused to visitors that they found conversation difficult. Muscat, which had hitherto been quite isolated, was also linked up by cable with Jask in 1901.

Great Britain had long possessed, on the island of Kishm, an *enclave* at Basidu, several square miles in extent, which was granted in 1798 by the Sultan of Oman, who then owned Kishm. Basidu was for many years the Gulf headquarters of the old Indian Navy, and has never been entirely abandoned. I have seldom seen a more pathetic sight than the ruined barracks and hospital and dwelling-houses at Basidu. In the deserted graveyard at the edge of the sea many brave sailors, and even English ladies, lie buried. Steps were taken by Lord Curzon to make the British ownership of Basidu more definite, though the influx of settlers was strictly discouraged.

The surveys of the Persian Gulf were originally made by officers of the Indian Navy early last century, and were remarkably good and accurate, though incomplete. At

Lord Curzon's instance they were revised and checked at many points, and new surveys were also carried out. Special officers were detailed by the Admiralty to superintend the work. Three gunboats were designated for regular service in the Gulf, instead of the rather makeshift arrangement which had previously existed. Large cruisers were repeatedly sent to "show the flag" in Gulf waters, as a reply to the frequent naval demonstrations of foreign Powers. By contract with the British India Steam Navigation Company, a fast mail service was established to Gulf ports, and Koweit was for the first time made a regular port of call. A good deal of scientific exploration was undertaken on both sides of the Gulf.

The consular establishments, which were extremely inadequate, were also enlarged and extended. A consul was placed at Bunder Abbas, and political agents at Bahrein and Koweit, and vice-consuls were stationed at Kerbela and Ahwaz. Nearly all the consulates and residencies were either rebuilt during Lord Curzon's term of office, or new buildings were planned and afterwards constructed. The commercial missions which were despatched, one by Lord Curzon and the other by the British Board of Trade, accumulated a mass of information which was subsequently of great service.

The period of pronounced international endeavour to undermine the supremacy of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf ended, for the time being, in 1903, having lasted over five years. Lord Curzon had successfully resisted every attack, and had once more made clear the specific and imperative character of the Persian Gulf doctrine of British policy. The Government of India had in previous years shown some disposition to treat Gulf politics as an ordinary detail of administration, a little more important than the Andamans, perhaps, but hardly so worthy of attention as the problem of a refractory Maharajah who showed an unrighteous disposition to hammer his Prime Minister. Lord Curzon recalled both India and England to a sense of

the supreme importance of the Persian Gulf, and made it a separate and vital issue. He laid down a detailed policy which will serve for the guidance of his successors, and he saw that it was enforced at all points.

Lord Curzon's work in the Gulf appropriately culminated in his own official tour in Persian and Arabian waters in November and December 1903. Never before had a British Viceroy of India passed through the Straits of Hormuz. He left Karachi on board the Royal Indian Marine steamship *Hardinge*, and there sailed with him H.M.S. *Argonaut*, a first-class cruiser, H.M.S. *Hyacinth*, a second-class cruiser (the flagship of Admiral Atkinson-Willes), and H.M.S. *Fox* and H.M.S. *Pomone*, third-class cruisers. At Muscat the squadron was met by H.M.S. *Sphinx*, special service vessel, H.M.S. *Lapwing*, gunboat, and the R.I.M.S. *Lawrence*, the despatch-boat of the Persian Gulf Resident. No such assemblage of warships had ever been seen in the Gulf and its approaches in modern times. The only parallel in history was the visit of Albuquerque, Portuguese "Governor of India," to Hormuz in 1515 with twenty-seven vessels, most of which were really galleys. The cruise lasted three weeks, and during the greater part of it Lord Curzon was accompanied by Sir Arthur Hardinge, then British Minister at Teheran. At Muscat the town and forts, and the ships of the squadron, were illuminated, and at a great Durbar on the *Argonaut* the Sultan was presented with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Indian Empire. At Shargah there was another Durbar, at which Lord Curzon delivered a stirring address to the Trucial Chiefs of Oman. Bunder Abbas was next visited, and on entering Persian territorial waters Lord Curzon was received by the Derya Begi, the Governor of the Gulf ports, on behalf of the Shah. At Lingah the Viceroy gave a dinner to the Derya Begi on board the *Hardinge*, and the town and ships were illuminated. Then the squadron crossed to Bahrein, where there were further ceremonials, and afterwards it proceeded

to Koweit, where the Viceroy was received with impressive honours. Sheikh Mubarak, with his sons and chief retainers, awaited his landing at the head of a great cavalcade of Arab horsemen. A spectator wrote that "amidst the firing of guns and the guttural shouts of the Arabs, the procession set off, helter-skelter, for the town across the great open plain, surrounded by a cloud of horsemen, who galloped wildly ahead, hurled their spears or discharged their carbines in the air, curveted, pirouetted, and went through all the time-honoured evolutions of an Arab field-day." In the intervals between these formal visits to the principal ports a number of points of interest and importance were called at and carefully examined.

The only untoward incident occurred at Bushire, where owing to a difficulty on a point of etiquette the Viceroy decided not to land. The Ala-ed-Dowleh, Governor-General of the province of Fars, had been deputed to welcome Lord Curzon, and elaborate preparations had been made. At the last moment he sought to alter the programme, insisted that Lord Curzon should rèceive him in a Persian house and not in the British consular building, and further that, contrary to previous agreement, Lord Curzon should call on him first. As the new arrangement implied that the Viceroy and the Ala-ed-Dowleh would both be staying in the same house, and exchanging visits across the passage, it was plain that a slight was intended. Russian influence, then in the ascendant at Teheran, was at the back of the incident. It had, however, an effect which was the exact reverse of what was intended. The people of Bushire were intensely mortified because the Viceroy would not land, and thought that the Ala-ed-Dowleh had "lost face," as the Chinese say. The Ala-ed-Dowleh quickly came to the same conclusion. I recall that the editor of a little Bushire newspaper, thinking to curry favour, published directly afterwards the first of a series of articles condemning Lord Curzon's action, and promising to return to the subject "in our next issue."

But the next issue never appeared, because the Ala-ed-Dowleh happened to read the article, and at that particular moment was prepared to wreak his wrath on the first convenient victim; so he sent for the editor, and had him soundly thrashed with sticks by his guards.

On his way back to Karachi Lord Curzon called at Jask and Pasni. No Viceroy had ever visited the coast of Mekran before, and at Pasni, where a Durbar was held, there was a large gathering of Baluchi notables. The tour, and the imposing conditions under which it was conducted, made a deep impression upon the peoples of the Gulf, and did much to strengthen and solidify British prestige and authority.

I have discussed Lord Curzon's work in the Persian Gulf in considerable detail, because its intrinsic importance seems to have escaped due recognition in England. These little squabbles about flags and tons of coal, these hurried voyages of gunboats and interviews with obscure chieftains, these pothers about barren islets and deserted bays, are only the external manifestations of a very grave and fundamental issue. British supremacy in India is unquestionably bound up with British supremacy in the Persian Gulf. If we lose control of the Gulf, we shall not rule long in India. Out of the medley of facts I have set forth, the broad conclusion emerges that determined attempts were made, from several quarters, to undermine our paramountcy, and that they were only frustrated by ceaseless vigilance and prompt action.

Why is it so necessary to retain control of the Gulf? There is, first of all, the duty incumbent upon us, which we cannot now evade, to keep the peace within its waters. If we were to lose our grip, piracy, slave-dealing, raids and counter-raids, all the characteristics of the days of barbarism, would at once recommence. The flare of burning coast-towns, scenes of rapine and bloodshed, would instantly remind us of our abandoned obligation. Having taken up

the burden, we owe it to the peoples of the Gulf, who live in security under our guardianship, not to relinquish it. There is next the need for keeping open an important trade-route, in the maintenance of which both India and England are concerned. There is further, as Admiral Mahan has repeatedly pointed out, the imperative necessity of resisting to the utmost the establishment of an armed and fortified position by any foreign Power in or near the Gulf. Why did France and Russia, in the days when England was not on good terms with them, seek to obtain a permanent foot-hold in these regions? They were not looking for trade, and manifestly coaling stations so far from the great ocean highways would be of no real use to them. Their one object was to menace India. But—and this is the most important fact in the whole question of the Gulf—in order to disturb irreparably the rule of the British in India, it is not at all necessary for a foreign Power to create a fortified base in Gulf waters. A mere territorial acquisition, the presence of a small garrison, the creation of a quite defenceless harbour of refuge, would suffice. The moment it became known that Russia, or Germany, or France, or any other powerful nation, had planted a post within easy reach of the shores of India, an ineffaceable impression of the impermanence of British rule would be produced throughout Hindustan. Industrial enterprise would be checked, native capital would no longer be invested, the spirit of unrest would receive a strong impetus, the task of holding the country, already difficult, might become almost impossible. India has endured many alien rulers, and they have all fallen in their turn. She is accustomed, and perhaps over-ready, to watch for the signs which in her belief portend the approaching doom. The appearance of a foreign Power anywhere in the Gulf, under however innocent a guise, would carry one irresistible conviction to the mind of every intelligent Indian.

I say nothing of the possible danger of the creation of a fortified base within striking distance of our chief route to

the East and to Australia. That is a question for naval strategists. But I have often marvelled at the placid affability with which able politicians and responsible newspapers have invited foreign Powers to share with us the control of the Gulf. I heard Mr. Balfour utter his memorable invitation to Russia to acquire a warm-water port in the Pacific. The immediate and not unnatural response was the seizure of Port Arthur. In the same way, and with no clearer perception of the ultimate consequences, journalists and orators often say that Russia ought not to be debarred from an outlet upon the Indian Ocean. To what end? If it is for purposes of trade, there is hardly any port, except in those very regions, where our own trade predominates, which Russia cannot reach more easily from the Baltic, the Black Sea, or the Pacific. Some soldiers of high repute say they would welcome the establishment of a Port Arthur in the Gulf. "It would make Russia more vulnerable" is their contention. But ships are of little avail against modern fortresses, and what these ardent warriors do not remember is that while our scanty army was seeking to invest the new Port Arthur, India might be aflame with wild revolt at the first shot of a war which carried her garrison far away. The idea of a fortress in the Gulf, though improbable, is not fantastic, as little Portugal once proved. The question may be academic to-day, but it was not academic ten years ago, and may not be so ten years hence. The nations are drawing nearer to the central sea of the Old World.

Come what may, we have to keep our control of the Gulf inviolate. As Lord Lytton said: "We cannot haggle with destiny." Yet, as time passes, the task will become more difficult than it has ever been. The Baghdad Railway, when it is completed, will profoundly modify the conditions at present prevailing in the Gulf. No weight attaches to the lugubrious predictions of the prophets who say that the railway will never be made. Exactly the same things were

said about the Siberian line. Mr. Balfour showed truer prescience when he warned the House of Commons in 1903 that "whatever course English financiers might take, and whatever course the English Government may pursue, sooner or later this great undertaking will be carried out." Though I question the wisdom of British participation, a commercial terminus at Basra will not infringe our doctrine, and presents no basis for opposition. I have never doubted the utility of the Baghdad Railway. When the locomotive is traversing Mesopotamia, and when Sir William Willcocks has revived by irrigation the ancient fertility of Chaldea, the Gulf will have been brought into close contact with the world without, and will be the sea route to a land of great prosperity. Professor Rohrbach has estimated that in the eighth century the plain between the Tigris and the Euphrates produced ten million tons of corn, and supported a population of six millions. It may do so again, though now it supports barely a million. When Chaldea is once more a granary, and a great stream of ocean traffic is threading the Gulf, it will not be easy to maintain unimpaired the paramountcy of Great Britain. At a time when they were in some danger of being forgotten, Lord Curzon reiterated to the whole world our claims; but it is still a defect of our policy that it rests on a negative rather than a constructive basis, and that we are too timorous in vindicating rights which we cannot afford to forego. Many of our statesmen are still reluctant to acknowledge that we are dealing in the Gulf, not merely with little local questions, but with the safety and welfare of our rule in India.

II. SOUTHERN PERSIA AND SEISTAN

The specific interest of the Government of India in Persian affairs is not confined to the Gulf littoral, which has been treated as a separate issue. It extends over the whole of Southern Persia, and throughout the Persian

territories which adjoin the Perso-Afghan frontier. No part of this wide area is of greater importance to India than Seistan. The province of Seistan lies in the corner of Persia where the western frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan meet. It commands the valley of the Helmund, that remarkable river which, after traversing 700 miles across Afghanistan, loses itself in the vast swamps of the depression known as the Hamun-i-Helmund. There is some reason to believe that long ago the greater part of Seistan was entirely under water, and that much of the area which is now dry land was formed from silt brought down by the river. Its alluvial soil is extremely fertile. In past ages it was one of the granaries of Asia, and Alexander wintered within its borders with his conquering army. For many centuries it was held by Persia, and under one dynasty even contained the capital of the Persian Empire. After the death of Nadir Shah, the province was included in the rising kingdom of Afghanistan, but much of it gradually lapsed again into the possession of Persia, though its vague boundaries were a cause of constant quarrels between Persians and Afghans. Persian Seistan now has an area of about 950 square miles, and a population estimated at 100,000.

Seistan is practically a badly tilled oasis in the midst of deserts and swamps. The great barren regions which lie beyond its western borders make the province of great strategic value. At its southern extremity it touches British territory. Its possession would be an important preliminary to a comprehensive advance upon India, or an invasion of Afghanistan. An army marching southward through Eastern Persia must first seize and hold Seistan. Once firmly planted there, it would dominate the line of the Helmund, menace a British advance north-westward from Quetta through Kandahar, and sterilise the plan of campaign by which it is understood the British Army in India has long proposed to meet a concerted movement from the

north. The exclusion of foreign Powers from Seistan is therefore a cardinal feature of the measures devised for the defence of India; and it is not surprising that the province came into very great prominence during the period when Russia was endeavouring to extend her influence southward. Quite suddenly it became the battleground of conflicting interests.

The Seistan question had already been intermittently under public notice in the guise of boundary disputes, and boundaries again formed one of the chief issues to which attention was directed. The encroachments of Persia in the sixties were bitterly resented by Afghanistan, and Great Britain was frequently asked by both sides to settle the quarrel. Somewhat reluctantly, the British Foreign Office despatched a Mission under Major-General Sir Frederic Goldsmid, who spent two weary years in deciding, not only the line of demarcation between Persia and Afghan Seistan, but also a portion of the Perso-Baluch frontier. His ultimate award, given in 1872, dissatisfied both Persia and Afghanistan, though it was accepted after demur. The Afghans were indignant because Persia was confirmed in the possession of the largest and richest slice of Seistan; the Persians grumbled because an important section of the Helmund was left in Afghan territory. At Kohak, a point south-east of Nasratabad, there is a great "Band" or dam across the Helmund, primitive in construction, but of much importance for the irrigation of Seistan. General Goldsmid made the river the frontier line for a great part of the way between the dam and the point at which it entered the lagoon; but he gave all the river above the dam to the Afghans. It does not require an expert to perceive that some share in the control of a river above a dam is essential to successful irrigation. General Goldsmid was not oblivious of the fact, but though he laid it down that any undue interference by the Afghans with the waters of the Helmund would be a contravention of the spirit of the award, he seems to have thought such an event improbable.

General Goldsmid had not taken into account either the vagaries of Nature or the disposition of the local Afghans. Below the dam, he had left the Persians on one side of the river and the Afghans on the other. But rivers in the sandy regions of Asia have a perplexing habit of suddenly altering their course. An irrigation engineer once went to bed in a bungalow on the very edge of the Indus and woke up in the morning to find that the river was five miles away. The same thing happened to the Helmund, which shifted its course eight miles to the westward, while the great lagoon simultaneously altered in size and situation. The Afghans clung to the right bank of the river, regardless of documentary awards; they showed a strong disposition to claim both banks below the dam; and they further began, by diversions far above the dam, to deprive the Persians of their reasonable share of water. Disputation recommenced, local at first, though in the end the quarrel was taken up by the authorities at Kabul and Teheran. An astute Russian Consul, M. Miller, had been sent to Seistan in 1900, and he espoused the Persian cause with ominous vigour. In 1902 the Persian Government asked for the intervention of Great Britain, under the clause of the Paris Treaty of 1857 which provided that differences between the Persian and Afghan Governments should be settled by the friendly offices of the British Government. Lord Curzon, at the instance of the Home Government, therefore despatched Sir Henry McMahon, a frontier officer of great experience, at the head of a well-equipped Mission, to arbitrate between the rival claimants.

Russia, then rapidly developing a keen interest in Seistan, was eager to take a hand in the settlement, though she had no possible justification for her intrusion. Three several attempts to thrust Russian officials upon the Mission were successively foiled, but Russian influence predominated in the camp of the Persian Commissioners. M. Miller and his brother, a doctor, were instrumental in persuading the

Persian local authorities to obstruct in manifold ways Sir Henry McMahon and his staff. The Mission was refused supplies, and at one time was even ordered back, though present on the unsolicited invitation of the Persian Government. The story of the Seistan Mission is a narrative of quiet firmness and of constant restraint under frequent provocation. The delays were interminable and the complications constant. A problem which might have been settled in a couple of months kept the Mission on the spot for over two years. It started in January 1903, and did not return to India until May 1905.

Territorial adjustments had to be made, in addition to the settlement of the dispute about water. Both sides wished to infringe the Goldsmid line, and Persia was eager to secure a large tract of country above the dam. Sir Henry McMahon made some minor rectifications, but on the whole he adhered to the spirit of the Goldsmid award. The water difficulty was more complex, and it had been intensified, and partly produced, by a severe drought, which temporarily left the Helmund almost dry. After careful examination with the aid of experts, Sir Henry McMahon came to a decision which seems eminently fair. He declined to admit the rather ingenuous contention of the Afghans that as they held the whole of the river above the dam, they could do what they liked with all the water in it. He took a point called Bandar-i-Khamal Khan, about forty miles above the great dam, at which point he considered the Helmund first penetrated the whole province of Seistan as anciently constituted. The Persians, he said, were entitled to the use of one-third of all the water passing that point; but they could not divert it into Persian Seistan until it reached the dam. A British irrigation expert was to be stationed in Seistan to see that neither side abstracted more than its allotted share of water. An important feature of the award was that Persia was prohibited from alienating to any other Power the water rights thus conferred, without the consent

of Afghanistan. The award was only accepted by the Governments concerned after very great delay, and the suggested appointment of a British irrigation officer was not endorsed. Owing to the prolonged detention of the Mission, a project to settle in detail the undemarcated portion of the Perso-Baluch boundary was not proceeded with, though various small disputes arising therefrom were adjusted by negotiation at Teheran.

The Seistan Mission may claim to have amply fulfilled its object, and to have averted the danger of a very ugly quarrel. In addition to much local excitement both sides were moving troops towards the troubled area, and for a time actual conflict appeared not improbable. Lord Curzon watched and directed the whole of the negotiations, for he was in constant telegraphic communication with Sir Henry McMahon; and it was owing to his personal representations that the Amir consented, after some hesitation, to accept the rectification of the boundary. Moreover, the presence in Seistan for so long a time of a British Mission with a strong escort did much to promote good feeling between the representatives of the Government of India and the population, in spite of many acts of petty hostility on the part of the local officials.

Before Lord Curzon's arrival the Government of India had shown some disposition to recognise the political importance of Seistan. Lord Curzon himself, in his book on Persia, had urged that a trade-route should be opened thither across Baluchistan, and Colonel C. E. Yate and Sir Henry McMahon had later made similar representations. Lord Elgin so far acquiesced that in 1896 he sent Major Webb-Ware to Chageh, half-way between Quetta and Seistan, to develop a trade-route; and to Major Webb-Ware belongs the credit of years of energetic toil to accomplish this purpose. In 1898 Lord Elgin ordered Major P. Molesworth Sykes, then Consul at Kerman, to Nasratabad, the principal town of Seistan, as a temporary measure; but he was opposed to any very active display of British interest in

Seistan, because he feared that it might precipitate the extension of Russian influence in the province.

Lord Curzon very soon took a different view. He was forced to do so, long before the Seistan Mission was asked for, because the advent of M. Miller had modified the situation; but the pressure of circumstances coincided with his own inclination. He had a strong belief in the possibilities of trade by land with Seistan, and a vivid perception of the necessity of excluding the province from Russian control. His belief in the openings for trade was over-sanguine, because there will never be much trade with Seistan until it recovers its lost prosperity; but it would be difficult to exaggerate the necessity of preserving it from foreign aggression. The only possible course, however, was the further development of British trade and interests, and after establishing a permanent Consulate at Nasratabad Lord Curzon set himself to the task. The greater part of the route through Baluchistan lay across trackless desert, bitterly cold in winter, fiercely hot in summer. Traders would not traverse it unless ample facilities were provided. Major Webb-Ware had begun to dig wells, to build rest-houses, to organise camel transport, and to establish levy posts for the protection of trade. The methods he initiated were greatly extended, and by the time Lord Curzon left India the route was well established. The Government of India acquired from the Khan of Khelat control of the district of Nushki, for an annual quit-rent, and built a railway from Quetta to Nushki, a distance of 93 miles. The object of the railway, which is on the standard gauge, was to overcome the mountainous descent from the Quetta plateau to the desert, hitherto a great obstacle to caravans. From Nushki to the frontier post at Robat Kila, a distance of 327 miles, a rough road was made, divided into nineteen stages. From Robat Kila to Nasratabad is another 106 miles. A postal service was opened along the route, frequent telegraph offices were established, and even in the midst of the desert native

shops were soon to be found. It cannot be said that the volume of trade has fulfilled the sanguine expectations originally formed, but it is steadily increasing. In 1909–10 the total value was over £83,000, and it has since become higher. Major Kennion, formerly British Consul for Nasratabad, has expressed the belief that owing to the insecurity of the routes from the Gulf the Nushki route will become more popular; and his prediction is being fulfilled. It can never be a great highway of trade until the distant day when Persia is regenerated.

The squalid story of Russian intrigues in Seistan between 1900 and 1905 does not deserve detailed recapitulation. It is a long record of efforts to produce hostility to British interests, and hatred of British representatives. Trade was harassed, and the Belgian customs officers, even more complaisant in Seistan than in the Gulf, became for a time the open allies of the Russian Consul. Efforts were made to compass the downfall of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, the hereditary Governor of Seistan, because he showed himself sympathetic to the British; and they were only defeated by the strong remonstrance of Sir Arthur Hardinge at Teheran. Russia instituted a mock quarantine cordon against the imaginary danger of plague, which was broken down after years of protest by the posting of a British Consul and a doctor to Turbat-i-Haidari, far to the north of Nasratabad. It is even believed that at one period the Russian Government actually tried to purchase Seistan, most of the province being Crown land. As in the Gulf, the disasters of the Japanese War at length put an end to Russian pressure in Seistan. The position also became easier because M. Miller allowed his zeal so far to outrun his discretion that he had to be judiciously transferred to another post. He fomented an anti-British riot in Nasratabad, and when it failed, and the ringleaders were punished, he sought the less contentious atmosphere of Kerman. The net result of Lord Curzon's vigilant attitude regarding Seistan was that, if trade

did not entirely fulfil expectations, the efforts of Russia to gain a preponderating influence were thwarted, and British interests were securely established. What was at that time far more important was that the exclusion of foreign control from Seistan became a definite part of British policy.

The province is no longer likely to share the fate of Northern Khorasan. By the Anglo-Russian Convention, the whole of Persian Seistan has now been declared to be within the British sphere of influence, and the Seistan question has ceased to keep the Foreign Office at Simla awake o' nights. Properly administered, Persian Seistan might again become one of the gardens of the East. The traveller through its solitudes stumbles upon ruined cities, sometimes several miles in extent, which attest its forgotten glories. A journey in Seistan is one long revelation of the devastating consequences of neglect and misrule.

Elsewhere in Southern Persia active steps were taken to consolidate and develop British influence, and to extend British trade. The number of Consular officers was considerably increased. The Kerman Consulate was made permanent instead of temporary; Consuls were stationed at Shiraz and Kermanshah, and Vice-Consuls at Ahwaz and Bam; a military attaché was sent to the Meshed Consulate, and an officer of the Indian Army was chosen for a similar position at the Teheran Legation; special arrangements were made for training Indian officers to fill the new posts created in the Gulf, in Southern Persia, and along the Afghan frontier; and a scheme was devised for supplying to each Consulate suitable military escorts, the need for which was soon apparent when the country fell into disorder after the revolution.

The system of communications was also improved. With the approval of the Persian Government, a telegraph line was constructed from the Baluchistan frontier across the Lut desert to Kashan, and direct overland communication from India to Europe was thus established for the first time.

Messrs. Lynch, who are the real pioneers of British trade at the head of the Gulf, built a road from Ahwaz to Isfahan, through the Bakhtiari mountains. It was opened in 1900, though the negotiations which preceded its construction were completed before Lord Curzon went to India. The road is little more than a mule track, and it has deteriorated of late, but it is becoming an important highway of trade now that the Shiraz route is almost blocked by banditti. The chief obstacle to its success is the heavy tolls imposed by the greedy Bakhtiari tribesmen. Another project for a road from the Karun River through Luristan to Teheran, for which the Imperial Bank of Persia holds a concession, remains incomplete, and a scheme for a road from Bunder Abbas to Bam has never advanced beyond the stage of preliminary investigation. In 1904–05 a British Indian Commercial Mission was sent by Lord Curzon to South-Eastern Persia, to investigate the commercial resources of the country lying between Bunder Abbas, Kerman, and Yezd. The Mission was supported by the Upper India Chamber of Commerce and the Indian Tea Cess Committee, and was headed by Mr. A. H. Gleadowe-Newcomen, an able commercial man who has had large experience of Indian trade. The journey lasted six months, during which time the Mission traversed over 2000 miles of Persian territory. Mr. Gleadowe-Newcomen presented an admirable report, full of excellent suggestions, but the chief moral to be drawn from his inquiries is that the growth of trade in Persia depends before everything else upon good roads and rapid means of transit. The first need of Persia, given efficient and honest government, is not railways, but roads.

Another subject of importance dealt with during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty was that of the Persian customs administration, together with the cognate question of tariff revision. In 1898 the Persian Government pledged the customs of Bushire and Kermanshah as security for a loan from the Imperial Bank of Persia, a British institution.

In 1903 Great Britain lent Persia, through the Imperial Bank, £200,000, and in 1904 a further sum of £100,000, the security being the post and telegraph revenues, the Caspian Sea fishery dues, and the customs of "Fars and the Persian Gulf." The last-named term includes Mohammerah and the other ports of Persian Arabistan. The Imperial Bank negotiated a further loan of £1,250,000 during 1911. It will be noted that Great Britain therefore has a very special interest in the customs of Southern Persia, and has, in fact, obtained repeated assurances from the Persian Government that they shall not be pledged to any foreign Power. That interest is supplemented by the written promise obtained from the late Shah Nasr-ed-din, and afterwards confirmed by Muzaffar-ed-din, that no southern railway concession would be granted to any foreign Power without previous consultation with the British Government, that if railway concessions were granted in the north similar concessions would be granted to Great Britain in the south, and that Great Britain should have a prior right to build a railway to Teheran. Sir Edward Grey stated in the House of Commons in April 1910, that this explicit undertaking was regarded as still binding, though it would only be exercised to the extent prescribed by the Anglo-Russian Agreement. In pursuance thereof, the British Government applied in April 1911 for an option for a line from the head of the Gulf northwards through Ahwaz and Shuster.

The organisation of the Belgian Customs Administration was soon followed by a movement for tariff revision. For many years foreign imports and exports had been subjected to five per cent. duty, and as is very well known by old Gulf traders, even that modest impost was not always rigidly collected. Persia was eager to increase her customs revenue, and Russia was willing to oblige her. In 1902 a Tariff Convention was secretly concluded between the Russian and Persian Governments, which was very favourable to Russian trade, and highly prejudicial to Great Britain. The British

Foreign Office became aware of the negotiations just in time to mitigate their worst consequences. A separate commercial treaty between Great Britain and Persia, on the lines of the Convention with Russia, was hurriedly arranged, and was even promulgated five days earlier than the Russian compact. It did not save British trade from the unfair discriminations deftly introduced under the new tariff, but it lessened their detrimental effect. The real reason of the decline of British and Indian trade with Persia during the last two or three years is not so much the higher import duties or Russian competition, but rather the hopelessly chaotic state of the country.

Since Lord Curzon's return to England, events have moved very rapidly in Persia, and the motion has generally been downhill. The Shah Muzaffar-ed-din, yielding to the popular clamour for representative institutions, convoked a National Council or Mejliss in 1906, and died in the following January. He was succeeded by his son Mohamed Ali, who took the oath of fidelity to the new Constitution, but in 1908 bombarded the Parliament House and broke up the Council. Several cities and provinces of Persia rose in revolt against him, and when a force of Bakhtiaris and other tribesmen entered Teheran in July 1909, he abdicated under pressure and withdrew to the Crimea. His son, Sultan Ahmed Mirza, a boy of eleven years, was placed upon the throne, and the Mejliss reassembled. Mohamed Ali has since returned and raised a revolt. It is no injustice to the "Nationalist" party to say that under the Constitution the state of Persia is far worse than it ever was under the autocratic rule of former Shahs. Ministries at Teheran are constantly changing, the Treasury was until recently bare, and Isfahan and other cities are in the hands of reckless tribesmen. The Mejliss has not yet shown the capacity to create an efficient system of control, though the appointment of Mr. Shuster and other Americans to handle Persian finances raises hopes of better things.

While Mohamed Ali was playing fast and loose with the Constitution in 1907, Great Britain and Russia were quietly settling the character of their respective interests in Persia and elsewhere. The result of their mutual communications was the Anglo-Russian Convention, signed on August 31, 1907. The supporters of the Convention, who probably represent a majority of both great political parties in the United Kingdom, contend that while it possibly involved some sacrifice of British interests, it is justified because a broad examination of international conditions shows that it makes for peace. The value of a cordial understanding with Russia, it is argued, is far greater than the local and limited advantages which may have been lost. As abstract propositions, I do not now seek to dispute these contentions. The long recital in this volume of past exasperating differences with Russia in Persia and the Gulf, is the strongest possible proof that more friendly relations were eminently desirable. It may further be admitted that, up to the present, the framers of the Convention have been to a great extent vindicated by the results attained. The arrangement has tended, even more than the war in Manchuria, to remove the fear of a Russian advance which so long oppressed those charged with the defence of India. During the prolonged troubles in Persia, it has been the surest guarantee of undiminished mutual confidence between Russia and ourselves. Under occasional severe provocation, Russia has steadfastly refrained from intervening in Northern Persia, except when absolutely compelled to do so for the protection of her nationals. One hesitates to think of the entanglements into which both nations might have been drawn after the death of Muzaffar-ed-din, had it not been for the safeguards and the assurances which the Convention contained. Still more may it be said that it has had a steadying influence upon the European situation, and upon affairs in the Far East, during recent critical periods. These are great gains, and the supporters of the Convention are legitimately entitled to make the most of them.

Nevertheless, though the Convention may have served its immediate purpose, I believe that its full effects have still to be unfolded, and that it may yet be found to have produced serious dangers in Persia, as well as in Afghanistan and Tibet. No strong stress need be laid upon the insult it implies to Persia, though even that aspect of its provisions may some day become an appreciable factor. There can be no doubt that it gave grave offence to the Persians. Lord Curzon remarked in the House of Lords debate on February 6, 1908:

"I am almost astounded at the coolness, I might even say the effrontery, with which the British Government is in the habit of parcelling out the the territory of Powers whose independence and integrity it assures them at the same time it has no other intention than to preserve, and only informs the Power concerned of the arrangement that has been made after the agreement has been concluded."

Possibly these reproaches did not come with a very good grace from Lord Curzon, who was not always conspicuously punctilious in his treatment of Persian territory; yet their force cannot be denied. The arrangements concerning Afghanistan were at least made conditional upon the Amir's assent, but in the case of Persia no sanction was ever sought. There is something amazingly cynical in the spirit in which Western Powers dispose of the heritage of other races. In India we had the justification that there was no settled and ordered government, and that the country was torn asunder by internal strife. No complete parallel to those conditions is yet visible in China or in Persia. Asia, moreover, is not like other parts of the world where the West has entered into possession. In America and Australia the Western Powers found huge territories very scantily peopled. In Africa they came into contact with populations whose development had been arrested for many centuries. In Asia, on the other hand, they were confronted with ancient

peoples in a high state of civilisation, from whom the West had derived much of its knowledge. Though the appearance of the white races in the East has on the whole been of inestimable benefit to Asia, it will not be surprising if Asia in her turn exacts a terrible retribution for the spoliation which has too frequently accompanied it.

These considerations, however, are not likely to appeal to Occidental Governments in the present state of public feeling. It remains, therefore, to examine the sphere of influence in Persia which Great Britain selected as her own. What is a sphere of influence? Lord Curzon thus defined it in his Romanes lecture on "Frontiers," in 1907:

> "A Sphere of Influence is a less developed form than a Protectorate, but it is more developed than a Sphere of Interest. It implies a stage at which no exterior Power but one may assert itself in the territory so described, but in which the degree of responsibility assumed by the latter may vary greatly with the needs or temptations of the case. The native Government is as a rule left undisturbed; indeed its unabated sovereignty is sometimes specifically reaffirmed; but commercial exploitation and political influence are regarded as the peculiar right of the interested Power."

It will thus be seen that the recognition of a sphere of influence secures large privileges to the possessing Power. Under the Anglo-Russian Convention Persia was divided into three spheres. Great Britain obtained the south-east corner, including all the territory within a line drawn from the Afghan frontier through Gazik, Birjand, and Kerman to the sea at Bunder Abbas. Her sphere comprises Persian Seistan, most of the province of Kerman, and Persian Mekran. Russia secured the whole of Northern Persia. Her sphere extends through all territory north of a line drawn from Kasr-i-Shirin, on the Turkish frontier, through Isfahan, Yezd, and Kahk to the point where the Russian

and Afghan frontiers intersect. Half the entire country comes under her influence. The intervening regions, including the greater part of Southern Persia and the whole of the Gulf coast on the Persian side, constitute the third or neutral sphere. The areas allotted to Great Britain are thus exceedingly disproportionate. Lord Curzon has pointed out that she has only one city of any size—Kerman—as against eleven in the Russian sphere, and only one trade route as against seven in the north. Moreover, the British sphere consists largely of sterile soil and is very thinly populated.

Why did Great Britain concede so much to Russia and limit her own sphere within such narrow borders? I think I am able to supply the explanation. The boundary was thus fixed at the instance of Lord Kitchener, though he is in no sense responsible for the decision. It is understood that Lord Kitchener was asked what portion of Persia he would undertake to hold and defend with the troops then at his disposal in India. He replied that he could only hold Seistan and the country between Kerman and Bunder Abbas, the approaches to which from the north were largely desert. His report seems to have decided the character and extent of the British sphere. Obviously, however, if the Convention was really intended to "respect the integrity and independence of Persia," military considerations should not have dominated the delineation of spheres. The question was, not what we could defend, but what interests we desired to preserve and develop. A large proportion of British interests lay in the province of Fars and Arabistan, at Bushire, at Shiraz, at Isfahan, and along the Karun River. Voluntarily, by our own act, we dissociated ourselves from these interests, and abandoned our preferential position in regions where British trade and British prestige had been built up by many decades of work and sacrifice. Nor was this all. Even in delineation of the exiguous British sphere, the framers of the Convention blundered. With innumerable experts at their disposal, with many naval officers, military officers, and

travellers within call who knew the localities concerned, they blundered very badly. They drew their sphere on strategic lines, and left the southern key outside it. The key to the entrance to the Gulf is not the bare beaches of Bunder Abbas, but the islands and the anchorages which lie before it—Hormuz and Larak, Henjam and Kishm and the Clarence Straits. The line should at least have been drawn to Lingah, so as to make it clear that the British sphere really included the whole entrance to the Gulf, which these islands and anchorages command. It is no answer to say that these positions can be seized at any time by the Royal Navy. They ought to have been included in the Convention. The real truth was that nobody thought about them until it was too late.

If Persia was to be divided into spheres of influence at all, the only reasonable and equitable proceeding would have been to take a line from Seistan through Isfahan to the Karun River, and to declare all the country south of that line within the British sphere. That would have given Great Britain the full area in which her influence already predominated. A neutral zone might still have been preserved between the Russian and British spheres. The demarcation need not have implied, and should not have implied, any necessity to defend Southern Persia by military force Military considerations, as I have said, ought not to have entered into an arrangement which professed to be essentially pacific. When Sir Edward Grey was criticised by the late Earl Percy, he sheltered himself behind the fact that we had acquired a preferential position in Seistan. That was a considerable advantage, but it did not atone for the sacrifice of British interests elsewhere. Lord Fitzmaurice, perhaps inadvertently, disclosed the real situation in the course of the Lords debate. Asked why the important trade-route through Khanikin to Baghdad had been allowed to fall within the Russian sphere, he replied: "I venture to say that if we had attempted to cut that district

out of the Russian sphere I should not this evening be defending any arrangement at all." There lay the whole secret in a nutshell. The negotiators of the Convention were so eager to come to terms with Russia that they were ready to concede anything. The Convention has given us better relations with Russia, but it remains an exceedingly imperfect instrument. It has weakened our position in Southern Persia, the Afghanistan section is in some ways a dead letter, and in Tibet, where both Powers imposed upon themselves a self-denying ordinance, it has enabled China to replace suzerainty by sovereignty, to the very great detriment of the Tibetans. These are Pyrrhic triumphs.

The worst feature of the Convention is its political effect upon British interests in Southern Persia. Those interests were not explicitly defined, but they were substantial, and they were tacitly recognised by all nations. We have repeatedly asserted the peculiar and special character of our interests in the Gulf. They were not confined to its waters; they did not stop with the shore; they extended far inland. We have now deliberately announced, in effect, that we have no special interests to conserve in the whole expanse of Southern Persia from the Straits of Hormuz to the Shatt-al-Arab. The implied declaration constitutes a direct invitation to other Powers to establish their influence in places where our predominance was hitherto practically unchallenged. We have performed a superfluous act of renunciation. In that respect, at any rate, it would have been far better to have left the situation as it was.

The Convention further has a deleterious influence upon the doctrine of British paramountcy in the Gulf. That doctrine refers to land as well as sea. If it does not at least include the Persian littoral it is worthless; yet we have expressly excluded the Persian shore of the Gulf from our sphere. Having thus, by formal treaty, implied an infringement of the Gulf doctrine, Sir Edward Grey proceeded to reaffirm British claims in the Gulf in a letter addressed to

Sir A. Nicolson at St. Petersburg. He took comfort from the fact that the Russian Government had stated that they "do not deny" the special interests of Great Britain in the Gulf. The admission is satisfactory so far as it goes, but it has never been reduced to writing by Russia, and it rests to-day upon the mere verbal assurance of a Russian Am bassador. I believe that, partly as a consequence of this Convention, the time is coming when our claim to paramountcy in the Gulf will be directly challenged. The question will possibly come to a head when the Shatt-al-Arab is connected by rail with the Mediterranean. So long ago as 1892 M. Deloncle asserted in the French Chamber that England's claim "to keep order by herself in the Persian Gulf," and to be "sovereign arbiter of all disputes between the Arab, Persian, and Turkish chiefs" of the Gulf, was exercised "in a form European diplomacy has never recognised." M. Deloncle held no official position at the time, but his words were not without significance. More recently the German Press, at the time of the Abu Musa incident, showed a distinct disposition to question the British position in the Gulf. As time passes these tendencies will probably develop, and if we are not then prepared to maintain and vindicate our paramountcy in its present form, we may lose the position we have so laboriously created.

The future of Persia is clouded with uncertainty. Unless a strong and stable Government is evolved within a limited time, the whole country must fall to pieces. Already Sheikh Khazaal and other chieftains in the south have formed a confederacy to resist the encroachments of the Bakhtiari tribes. Nearly every province is infested with banditti, the trade-routes are left desolate, the cities have lost nearly every vestige of orderly control, the Teheran authorities have no grip upon the provincial administrations. No other country in the world is in such a chaotic condition. Persia is rapidly deliquescing. The Ministry which entered office in July 1910 began by showing signs of

strength, and disarmed the turbulent revolutionaries in the capital, but it soon lost its energy. Later Ministries have done little better. Great Britain and Russia have so far resolutely elected to permit Persia to work out her own salvation, and have abstained from intervention except for the protection of their nationals. The policy is a wise one, but it is a question whether it has not been carried to extremes in Southern Persia. We have been so careful to avoid interference that our passive attitude is now mistaken for weakness, and the presence of our representatives as spectators has ceased to act as a deterrent of strife and anarchy. Every friend of Persia hopes that the Nationalists may in the end evolve an efficient administration, but the present situation cannot continue indefinitely. If Persia does not recover balance, the two Powers most interested may eventually be compelled to intervene, even against their own desires.

III. TIBET

The other great external episode associated with Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty was the unveiling of Lhasa. It is not necessary to relate here in detail the dramatic story of the Tibet Mission. I have recounted at length the history of Lord Curzon's policy on the North-West Frontier, and in Persia and the Gulf, because the facts are not readily accessible; but the expedition to Lhasa has already found numerous chroniclers. Its motives and its experiences are alike set forth in the picturesque narratives of Mr. Perceval Landon and Mr. Edmund Candler, in the more sober record of Colonel Waddell, and in the exhaustive and authoritative account recently issued by Sir Francis Younghusband, the leader of the Mission. The despatches of which it formed the subject are printed in voluminous Blue Books. My only purpose is to state certain views regarding its conduct and its results.

In doing so, it is necessary to say first that no incident during Lord Curzon's rule was made the text for more stupid and groundless criticism than the Mission to Lhasa. The public were asked to believe that the expedition was merely an instrument sent to gratify the curiosity of a Viceroy who was also an ardent geographer. They were told, in another vein, that Lord Curzon had brought misery and death to an inoffensive people in a frustrated attempt to emulate Lord Dufferin by enlarging the boundaries of the Indian Empire. The impression thus created was deepened when differences about the Lhasa Treaty arose between the Home authorities and the Government of India, and it was further accentuated by the tone of the later despatches of the Secretary of State, Mr. St. John Brodrick, now Viscount Midleton. Though I never ascribed the motives I have mentioned, I was among those who at first opposed the entry into Tibet, and may therefore claim to regard the question with some degree of impartiality. The ultimate revelation of the reasons which impelled Lord Curzon to advocate the constitution of the Tibet Mission ought to have been sufficient for all reasonable men.

No one who has gazed upon the mighty peaks of the Himalayas beyond Darjeeling can fail to feel instinctively that they are the natural northern boundary of India. On moonlit nights their majesty is beyond expression. High in the sky above the blue haze, they seem like the tents of the gods. They set a barrier to man's dominion which no ruler of India has ever sought to disregard. Yet they have been no obstacle to human intercourse, for through the narrow passes pilgrims and traders have passed to and fro between Tibet and India from time immemorial. A hundred years ago a Chinese army even crossed the range, and with incredible persistence advanced almost within sight of the capital of Nepal.

Tibet is not so poor as it seems. The race which crowned so many hills with great temples and monasteries,

and once for a brief space even threatened to dominate China, is not destitute of material resources. The trade of Tibet is considerable, and might be far greater were the country not bound in fetters forged by monkish intolerance. The saucer-like depressions amid the high places of Western Tibet, produced by glacial action in the days when the mountains towered for eight miles towards the skies, probably contain the richest deposits of placer gold in the world. A pannikin of soil washed anywhere in these cups reveals visible traces of flake gold. Riches beside which the wealth of Klondike would seem meagre lie in the heart of a vast inhospitable emptiness, rarely traversed by man.

The natural aspiration of India to increase its trade with Tibet is not necessarily stimulated by dreams of conquest. It is anomalous for a great Empire to find on its frontier a land to which access is barred, which is reluctant to admit merchandise, and will not even enter into friendly communication. So thought Warren Hastings, who sent envoys into Tibet; but their work was soon undone by the Chinese. Every British attempt to establish trade relations with the Tibetans has split in the past upon the rock of Chinese obstruction. From first to last, the suzerainty of China over Tibet has been deliberately exercised to maintain isolation.

The Tibetan populace has usually been well disposed, but the priestly hierarchy has joined hands with the mandarins of China in closing the gates. The monks have on occasion incited the people against us. After the failure of Warren Hastings, the Bengal Government left Tibet alone for a century. A Mission to Lhasa was eventually organised in 1886, but countermanded. The Tibetans, no doubt prompted by their leaders and the Chinese, took advantage of the collapse of the Mission to make an inexplicable invasion of British territory. They are marvellous wall-builders, and in one night they built a wall within our frontier over three miles long. Our troops promptly expelled them, but

forbore to follow up the advantage they gained. Negotiations with China ensued, and in 1890 a Convention was concluded, which settled the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet, and provided that Joint Commissioners should meet to consider the questions of facilities for trade, pasturage for Tibetan cattle in Sikkim, and mutual methods of communication.

The Convention practically came to naught. The Chinese professed to be unable to enforce it, and the Tibetans, who had begun to realise the weakening of Chinese influence, declined, in effect, to be bound by an agreement made with China. As Lord Curzon afterwards remarked, the relations between India and Tibet moved in a vicious circle. Chinese and Tibetans each denied the validity of arrangements made by the other with India. Both played the game of Spenlow and Jorkins to perfection, but it was noticeable that the chief hostility came at that time from the Tibetan authorities. They had begun to dream of emancipating themselves from the control of the Middle Kingdom, and of entering into intimate relations with Russia. The Joint Commissioners met, and entered into a further agreement in 1893 which was not worth the paper on which it was written. A trade mart established at Yatung, in a saddle of the mountains, proved unsuitable. The Tibetans built one of their favourite walls to prevent their traders from reaching it. They levied a duty on Indian goods in defiance of their promise. Above all, they repudiated the boundary accepted by China.

Lord Curzon, on reaching India, found relations with Tibet at an absolute deadlock. His letters to the Dalai Lama were returned unopened. A tour made along the frontier by Mr. Claude White, a political officer of much experience, was unproductive. A proposal made by the Chinese Government for a further conference between Mr. White and Chinese and Tibetan representatives led to no result. Lord Curzon sent to Khamba Jong, on the

Tibetan frontier, not only Mr. White, but also Colonel Francis Younghusband, then Resident at Indore. He had met Colonel Younghusband in Chitral in 1894, and had rightly conceived a high opinion of his judgment and capacity. The Commissioners lingered for months during 1903 at Khamba Jong, but in vain. The officials who met them were inferior in rank, and unwilling to negotiate. The Tibetans utilised the delay to make ostentatious military preparations, and stopped all trade. China asked for further postponement, but seemed unable to influence the situation.

There was a good reason for the paralysis of Chinese influence. The Emperor's suzerainty over Tibet had almost ceased to exist. The Chinese Residents in Lhasa had long lost effective control. For the first time for many decades, a Dalai Lama had grown to manhood instead of suffering that untimely death which had been the lot of his predecessors. His tutor during his minority had been one Dorjieff, a Siberian Buriat professing the Buddhist faith. Dorjieff was a Russian subject, and had gained great influence during his twenty years' residence in Lhasa. He was received by the Tsar, as an envoy from the Dalai Lama, in 1900 and again in 1901, at a time when the communications of the Viceroy of India were being treated with silent contempt. He returned to Lhasa bearing rich gifts from Russia, as well as presents of more sinister import. The evidence of Kawaguchi, the Japanese devotee who was in Lhasa at the time, seems indisputable. He declares that of five hundred camels which arrived carrying presents, one-half were laden with small arms and ammunition; and it does not much detract from the significance of his statements that, as was afterwards found, the Tibetans let the rifles rust and were unable to use many of them in their hour of need. Dorjieff played a double game. In Lhasa he represented the Tsar as an incarnation of the founder of the Tibetan religion, eager to build up a great Buddhist Empire; in St. Petersburg and Yalta he declared that the

Dalai Lama sought Russian protection. A people who believed that Queen Victoria was an incarnation of the goddess of their Jo-khang temple found no difficulty in accepting assurances of the divinity of the Tsar; and Russia was not unwilling to extend her influence in a direction which seemed so promising. Dorjieff's path in Tibet was systematically paved with Russian gold; and whatever his original purpose may have been, he became in the end, and was perhaps from the outset, an emissary of the Russian Government.

The comings and goings of Dorjieff did not escape the official attention of Great Britain. There were ambassadorial interviews, at which the British interlocutor was assured that the Buriat priest had visited Russia on a religious mission. A concurrent report that Russia had concluded a secret agreement with China for the establishment of a Russian protectorate over Tibet was strenuously denied. Nevertheless, a communication from the Russian Ambassador in London, in which Russia sought to protest against the supposed despatch of a British expedition to Tibet, caused great uneasiness. It looked for a time as though Russia claimed the right to a special position regarding the affairs of Tibet; and though a subsequent interview between Count Benckendorff and Lord Lansdowne served to modify this impression, the intrigues of Russian agents—for there had been more than one—were still regarded with considerable apprehension. In any case the communications between the Dalai Lama and the Tsar had produced an unfortunate effect. Dorjieff was in Lhasa in 1903 still deluding his victim into the belief that he had Russia at his back. His action at this stage was no doubt unauthorised, but it was sufficiently mischievous to accelerate hostilities.

The Russian intrigue at Lhasa is so far a closed episode that it can be discussed dispassionately and without offence. Whether the Russian Foreign Office instigated Dorjieff in the first instance, or whether Dorjieff gradually interested

the Russian Government in his schemes, does not now matter very much. The point which a careful examination of all the evidence reveals is that by his policy of persistence Lord Curzon crushed a cleverly veiled design. Had he been content to accept continuous rebuffs on the Tibetan frontier; had he not constantly urged the Home Government to sanction the steps he proposed, there can be little doubt that Russian influence might have been paramount in Lhasa to-day. The suzerainty of China was all but extinguished. The Dalai Lama was communicating with Russia with all the freedom of an independent ruler, regardless of protests from Peking. Russia had not then met Japan in deadly conflict, and was still pursuing her dream of Asiatic expansion. Her Government would have been more than human had they refused to listen to the appeals of Dorjieff, uttered with the complacent approval of the pliant head of the Tibetan priesthood. When Dorjieff boasted that there would soon be Cossacks in the streets of Lhasa, he saw whither events were trending. There is good reason to believe that in a few years Russia would have declared a protectorate. It is commonly said now that the British expedition to Tibet had no permanent result; but the statement ignores the cardinal outcome of Lord Curzon's vigorous policy. From the moment he showed his determination to grapple boldly with the Tibetan question, Russian pretensions grew shadowy; and if the expedition brought about the ultimate restoration of Chinese suzerainty, at least it put an end to the scheme for making Lhasa a new centre of Russian influence.

Despite the precedent of the Chinese invasion of Nepal, no sane man would dream that Russian troops could ever enter India by way of Lhasa. The presence of a permanent Russian Mission so near the Indian border, and the extinction of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, would, however, have had a most disturbing influence upon India. Against its consequences even the mountains would have been no

protection. The British advance to Lhasa unquestionably saved us from that menace. It might have become very real had the Government of India remained supine.

The actual story of the Mission is now familiar. Sanction for an advance to Gyantse, about half-way to Lhasa, was given on November 6, 1903. The Secretary of State insisted that the advance was only for the purpose of obtaining reparation, that there was to be no permanent intervention in Tibetan affairs, and that the Mission should withdraw as soon as its object had been attained. No army in the world has ever before conducted a campaign—for that is what the expedition soon became—at an altitude frequently as high as the summit of Mont Blanc. At the engagement in the Karo Pass the Gurkhas were operating at a height of 19,000 feet. The whole enterprise was a triumph of organisation and daring, and at no time was its success more creditable than during the return journey. Colonel Younghusband says that Lord Cromer afterwards remarked to him that he thought most Englishmen could reach Lhasa, but "what he considered really praiseworthy was our getting back again."

The incident which attracted most attention during the advance was the fight at Guru on March 31, 1904, when the Tibetans attacked the British troops in the moment of apparent surrender. Their action was partly due to the numbed stupidity of their commander, and perhaps also to a misunderstanding of the causes of our long forbearance, which to them implied weakness. They lost 600 killed and wounded, and the story of their mournful retreat at a walking pace under fire made melancholy reading in the newspapers. Some such encounter was, however, inevitable when once the Tibetans had resolved to offer opposition. They believed, like the Boxers, that they were invulnerable to rifle bullets, and when the truth dawned upon them they were stupefied. For an instant the Mission was in actual danger; and the best proof that there was no persistent

retaliation is that the British soldiers only fired thirteen rounds per man. Colonel Waddell says "it was all over in ten minutes." It did not prevent further obstinate resistance.

Gyantse was reached on April 11, but there were no signs that the Tibetans meant to negotiate there. Lord Curzon sailed for England on April 30, and the control of affairs passed to Lord Ampthill. The actual conclusion of the Lhasa Treaty did not therefore take place under Lord Curzon's direction, though it was understood at the time that he was being consulted in London. The attitude of the Tibetans became unpleasantly clear on May 5, when they made a surprise attack on the Mission camp. The "jong" or fort, which had not been occupied by the British, began a bombardment with primitive pieces of ordnance. The Mission was at one period in real jeopardy, for assaults were made several times, and the position was almost besieged. General Macdonald arrived with reinforcements on June 26, and the "jong" was captured on July 6, but it was not until two days later that a further advance to Lhasa was sanctioned. The march was begun on July 14, the delay at Gyantse having lasted three months. The Mission arrived before Lhasa on August 3.

The Dalai Lama had fled, and Colonel Younghusband had eventually to negotiate with other leading Tibetan officials, who did not possess the same degree of authority. He was in a position of great perplexity, which was not lessened by the fact that it took him twelve days to communicate with Simla. He was further under strict injunction to leave Lhasa at the earliest possible moment, and had been reproved for a somewhat premature suggestion in June that he should winter there. He was in possession of a draft Convention sent him by the Government of India, and had already been acquainted by telegraph with the views of the Secretary of State. He had not, however, received a despatch in which those views were amplified, and it did not reach him until after the Treaty was signed.

The two points on which differences ultimately arose related to the amount of the indemnity, and the duration of the occupation of the Chumbi Valley as security for its payment. Mr. Brodrick had plainly said, in his telegram of July 6, that the indemnity should not be beyond the power of the Tibetans to pay, and might be spread over three years, if necessary; but he had also said that Colonel Younghusband was to be "guided by circumstances." The occupation of the Chumbi Valley was, he added, to continue until the indemnity was paid, or until trade marts had been opened for three years, "whichever is the latest." All through the despatches there is evidence that the aims of the Secretary of State and the Government of India were not quite identical. Lord Curzon and his deputies wanted a satisfactory settlement. Mr. Brodrick, whose decision in the matter was bound to be final, was chiefly eager to conclude the Mission and to evacuate Tibet; assurances to that effect had been rather unnecessarily given to Russia.

Colonel Younghusband eventually fixed the amount of the indemnity at a sum equivalent to half a million sterling. He believed Tibet could pay this amount, and it was calculated upon a basis already suggested by the Government of India. The Tibetans asked that they might be allowed to pay at the rate of one lakh of rupees (£6666) annually. Fearing, as he says, that if he did not agree he might be compelled to leave without a Treaty at all, he consented. But his consent involved the prospective occupation of the Chumbi Valley for seventy-five years, as security for payment; and Lord Lansdowne had informed Russia that occupation was not intended. Colonel Younghusband has given a very frank explanation of the reasons which influenced him. The Chumbi Valley is the key to Tibet. It is a tongue of land thrust into India, on the Indian side of the divide. He could not see that its occupation would break any pledges. He knew that it was the only strategical point of value on the northern frontier between Burma and Kashmir,

and in his own words, "he seized the golden opportunity." The Treaty was signed in the Potala, the great monastery-palace of the Dalai Lamas, on September 7, and on September 23 the homeward march was begun.

The Secretary of State was indignant at the disregard of his wishes. Mr. Brodrick, while at the India Office, was never very happy in drafting telegraphic despatches, and his telegrams concerning Tibet reveal a rapid development of wrath. By October 3 he was declaring that the provisions regarding the indemnity had been framed "in defiance of express instructions," and that His Majesty's Government could not "accept the situation created for us by our representative's disobedience of orders." He was severely criticised for his repudiation of Colonel Younghusband's action, though partly because his whole attitude at that period seemed to show a general determination to handle the Government of India roughly. Yet a careful examination of all the facts leads to the conclusion that in this respect at least his anger was well founded. No doubt Colonel Younghusband was in a grave predicament when he came to his decision. No doubt a stronger Minister with broader views might have thought it better to accept the situation as he found it, and pass over the contravention of his orders. But there are few men who, in Mr. Brodrick's place, would have acted otherwise than he did. His instructions from the outset had been clear and consistent. It is no answer to say that the Chumbi Valley has not been continuously Tibetan; the fact remains that it is within the borders of Tibet. It is no answer to say that the Tibetans were only willing to pay a lakh a year; the disparity between three years and 75 years is too great to be overlooked. It is even no answer to say that, as is undoubtedly the case, Colonel Younghusband's decision was most advantageous to India; orders should only be disregarded under the amplest possible justification, which did not here exist. No one who reads Colonel Young-

husband's explanation will be inclined to blame him: but it is equally difficult in this matter, now that passions have cooled, to condemn Mr. Brodrick.

The Government of India loyally defended their officer, though admitting that his error of judgment was serious; but the indemnity was promptly reduced to £166,000. The difference about the Treaty in no way diminished the high reputation Colonel Younghusband gained for his general conduct of the Mission. It was only through his quiet courageous persistence that Lhasa was ever reached at all, and the K.C.I.E. with which he was rewarded was not too lavish an acknowledgment of his services.

The change of Ministry by which Mr. Morley succeeded Mr. Brodrick at the India Office affected still further the fate of the Lhasa Treaty. The indemnity was paid in three instalments, and the money was really found by China. The Chumbi Valley was incontinently evacuated in January 1908, and almost the only visible signs which now remain of the British Mission are the new trade marts at Gyantse and Gartok, and the British Agent for commercial purposes at Gyantse; but it is doubtful whether the marts have ever been "effectively opened." The Lhasa Treaty, which was afterwards accepted by China, stipulated that Tibet should not cede territory, admit foreign representatives, nor grant concessions without the consent of Great Britain; but under the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 both Powers have now mutually agreed not to seek concessions, nor to send representatives to Lhasa, nor to negotiate further with Tibet except through the intermediary of the Chinese Government. Lord Curzon in the House of Lords on February 6, 1908, strongly, and with justice, condemned this admission of equality of interest between Great Britain and Russia in Tibet. An annexure to the document even made promises to Russia, which were quite superfluous, about the annexation of the Chumbi Valley.

China is the one Power which has reaped solid advantages

from the Tibet Mission. The Peking authorities were astute enough to perceive at once that the march on Lhasa would bring about the rehabilitation of their suzerainty, and they remained quiescent while British troops were in Tibet. They have now reaped their reward, for the Dalai Lama, after a brief return to his capital, is a fugitive in India, and Chinese suzerainty is being developed into practical sovereignty. Having agreed to recognise the validity of Chinese claims, we have no alternative but to leave the unfortunate Tibetans to their not too tender mercies. We have not extended our trade as we had hoped, and we have raised up for ourselves a new and disturbing situation on the north-eastern frontier of India.

For these results Lord Curzon cannot be held responsible, save only in a secondary degree. He kept Russia out of Tibet, he exacted reparation for affronts, and he furnished the opportunity of developing trade and friendly relations with the Tibetans. If that opportunity has been to a great extent thrown away by those who came after him, the blame does not lie at his door. Despite the fighting, the general restraint of the soldiery made a deep impression upon the people of Tibet, and in their new plight they turned at once to India for help, though necessarily without avail.

IV

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

It was a misfortune of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty that his countrymen at home never became acquainted with some of the more solid and enduring aspects of his internal administration of India. They heard of his stirring speeches and indefatigable journeys, of the trappings of the Delhi pageant, of the famine he fought successfully and the plague he fought in vain. The dust of bitter controversies was borne on the ocean winds, and the obscuring clouds of the final conflict swept homeward in their turn. England, absorbed for once in an Indian episode in which two great figures were at issue, came at last to associate Lord Curzon's Administration chiefly with the strife in which it closed. The object of this book is to restore perspective, to make it clear to those who care to listen that there was another side to Lord Curzon's rule, a far more important and permanent side which will be remembered, and will bring benefit to millions, when incidental differences are only recalled by those who love to disinter the curiosities of history.

The work that tells most in India, that confers most benefit upon the population, has few heroic qualities, save such as are found in the quiet devotion of those who perform it. It demands laborious effort, and weariless study of repellent details, and when it is done it often remains almost invisible to the world, even the world of India. The statesman who passes a measure for increasing popular representation in India is sure of immediate recognition. He has

achieved something visible and concrete, which can be seen and understood. But has he really touched and ameliorated the daily life of the people? Have his Councils and his complicated elections lightened the burden of the countless tillers of the soil? The cities foster the new ideals he has rightly sought to satisfy, but the cities of India are few. In all that teeming Empire there are only twenty-seven cities with a population exceeding 100,000, and only five whose inhabitants exceed a quarter of a million.

The census of 1901 showed a population of 196,000,000 directly dependent upon agriculture and cattle-rearing; but it has been estimated that "nine-tenths of the rural population of India live directly or indirectly by agriculture." The interests of the bulk of these people centre almost solely upon the land. They have few thoughts and aspirations beyond the plough and the byre. Land problems are the real heart of the politics of India. The truest test of a Viceroyalty is the degree to which the holder of the office has helped the people on the land. They are more than the backbone of the country. They are almost the whole of India.

Lord Curzon in his last speech in India declared that the Indian peasant "should be the first and final object of every Viceroy's regard." Nominally he is so always. "The ryot at the plough" is a lay figure which has done duty in innumerable speeches. Very few Viceroys in modern times have, however, taken an intimate and practical and informed interest in his well-being. The ryot seems a simple factor, easy to comprehend, until he is approached at close quarters, when it is discovered that he is the symbol of problems of profound complexity and magnitude. Probably no man living has ever claimed to possess complete familiarity with Indian land questions. The utmost usually attempted is to learn something of the protean issues presented in a single province. Viceroys cannot be condemned when they have shrunk from contemplating the land question as a whole,

and have contented themselves with passing one or two measures intended to deal with limited provincial issues.

That Lord Curzon went to India determined to grapple with one aspect of the land question he has himself disclosed. The relief of agricultural indebtedness was in the category of twelve prospective reforms to which he alluded in his first Budget Speech. The realisation that it was necessary to go deeper did not fully dawn upon him until, in the great famine of 1899–1900 and in the inquiry which followed it, he came into detailed contact with the system of land administration in British India. He saw enough then to convince him of the folly of the suggestion that famines were caused by the incidence of land revenue collection rather than by drought; but he also gained clues which helped him to develop those large constructive changes which have wrought so much benefit among myriads of cultivators.

He perceived that the land revenue policy of the Government of India and of the Provincial Administrations lacked coherent statement, and he drafted a Resolution which set forth plainly and emphatically the principles by which it was guided. That was perhaps the most valuable, though in its direct effect the least tangible of his labours to improve the land administration. He introduced new principles of suspension and remission of land revenue collection in times of scarcity, which largely transformed the spirit in which the dues of the Government were collected. That was unquestionably the reform which was most widely appreciated, for it relieved the peasants from the terror of inexorable demands when their crops had failed. He started a great system of co-operative credit societies, now growing rapidly in extent and usefulness, which enabled the cultivator to obtain cheap capital, and broke the monopoly of exorbitant money-lenders. He saved the landholders of the Punjab from expropriation, encouraged the development of better relations between landlords and tenants in other provinces,

and extended the system of recording possessory rights in land, on which the smoothness of land administration so much depends. Finally, he accelerated the process of applying scientific principles to Indian agriculture, and by the creation of an Imperial Agricultural Department under an Inspector-General of Agriculture sought to co-ordinate effort for the improvement of the oldest and greatest of Indian industries. The recital of these activities does not exhaust the long story of his work for the betterment of the peasantry, as I shall have occasion to show, nor does it give any real impression of the ceaseless energy of an Administration which was constantly busy, in numberless minor ways, in improving the condition of the ryot. Where the catalogue is so extensive it is only possible to select.

It was my hope, in this chapter, to include a brief account of the land revenue system of British India, in a form which might be acceptable to readers who have no special interest in a somewhat abstruse topic. The ambition must remain unrealised, at any rate for the present, and perhaps for ever. The subject is so huge and varied that it requires a far larger canvas than is here available. It is full of exceptions and differences, and no statement can be made concerning it which does not need many qualifications. Possibly some day an Anglo-Indian Millet of the pen will arise, who will unfold the real romance of land revenue administration. Only then will a phase of British rule in India which lies buried beneath a mountain of returns and settlement reports take colour and life. If a more competent hand accomplishes the task, the true inwardness of Indian conditions will be revealed.

He will tell of the chaos into which the advancing British found the land revenue system plunged as they fought their way outwards over India; how the villages of the Deccan were left desolate by the merciless exactions of the Mahrattas; how Madras was ruthlessly stripped by the tax-gatherers; how Bengal was in the grip of the revenue-

farmers, and how in the Punjab the cultivator was the constant victim of spoliation, even though he fortified his village and followed the plough sword in hand. I have often wished that some historian would reconstruct for us a vivid picture of the economic condition of India a hundred and fifty years ago. It would be the most striking vindication of the British conquest ever penned, and would form a salutary admonition to those who inflame discontent.

Then the narrator will tell of the early mistakes of the British, of Pringle's disastrous over-assessment of the impoverished Deccan, and of the injudicious attempts made elsewhere to collect revenue which the harassed people were quite unable to pay. The late Sir Denzil Ibbetson, in his classic settlement report of the Karnal District, declares that in that tract the first British assessments were "incredibly oppressive," that it would have taken the whole gross produce of the land and cattle to satisfy the demand, and that Government guards were sent to watch the growing crops, and horse and foot quartered in the villages to compel payment. The earliest reforms were almost equally unfortunate. Lord Cornwallis thought to turn the revenue-farmers of Bengal into country squires by confirming them in possession and fixing the Government demand in perpetuity. His Permanent Settlement still endures, but the great growth in the value of land brings no direct benefit to the State, many of the descendants of the original holders have become absentee landlords, the tenants were for a long period rack-rented, the estates are often not developed, and there has been a prolonged subdivision of rights among middlemen.

The story will go on to describe how—except in the case of Bengal, which had to wait for the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885—initial errors were gradually corrected, until at last the cultivators found themselves subject only to demands which they were normally well able to meet, and relieved for ever from the process of unmitigated extortion which

filled the lives of their ancestors with misery and despair. It will rescue from unmerited oblivion the names of Englishmen who did greater work than the victors in war, because they built up that complex system of administration which brings the British Government in constant touch with every peasant in the land. These are the men, far more than the generals and the judges and the politicians, who slowly created in India that respect for British justice and fairness and probity which has not yet faded in the rural districts. The officers who settled the relations between the tillers of the soil and the Government, and their successors, who to-day handle those relations upon the principles thus laid down, are the chief builders and upholders of the fabric of British rule. Their work touches the daily lives of the people, and affects their daily happiness and prosperity. Some among them have been too long forgotten.

It will be a narrative which will tell of that amazing and never-ending work of survey, by which the whole Empire of India was laboriously examined and mapped until every field was plotted, every claim adjusted, and every right recorded, save only in those areas where the system in vogue required different treatment. It will recall the days, now unhappily passing away, when the ambition of every young civilian was to be placed in charge of the settlement of a district, to live therein until he knew every nook and corner of it, to meet in turn the people of every village and see their crops and talk to them beneath the village tree, to settle their dues for a term of years, and finally to write a report which gave a full and accurate description of their condition and mode of life. The older settlement literature, written in times of greater leisure than are found to-day, is among the most valuable of Indian records. The newer style is brief and formal and dull, typical of the changed conditions which do not permit intimate intercourse with the people. You learn the quality of their land, and how much they have to pay, but you get no glimpses of the

peasantry themselves, such as make even the first settlement report of the Peshawar District a document to linger over.

Even as I write, I am conscious of the diversity of India, which Lord Lansdowne called "a land of many countries." I shall perhaps be told that I am describing more particularly the process of assessing a district under *ryotwari* tenure, in which the cultivators have proprietary rights, and make their payments direct to the State; and that where there is *zemindari* tenure, and the land revenue is collected from landlords who deal with their tenants themselves, the method which prevails is somewhat different. The criticism, if it is made, will indicate the difficulty of generalising about the land in India. Yet if the picture I have suggested is ever drawn, it will show that behind the variety of system, and the far more bewildering variety of technical terms, the broad essential characteristics of the land and its administration are everywhere in India very much the same; that the predominant feature of the country is neither temples nor palaces nor elephants, but that collection of hedgeless sun-scorched fields and humble dwellings which constitutes an Indian village; that India is a world of small holdings, and the distinction of *ryotwari* and *zemindari* a thing of books and pedants; and that he who would understand India aright must turn not to the speeches of politicians in Council, but study rather the people on the land and the work of those who have to do with them.

Lord Curzon earned the right to an honourable place among those who have left their mark upon the land revenue administration of India. His most conspicuous service was that he gave it powerful vindication at a time when it stood sorely in need of defence, and when the criticism to which it was subjected seemed likely to be accepted in default of an adequate answer. Successive famines, with intervening periods of widespread scarcity, had placed millions of cultivators in a grave plight. A school of Indian critics arose which declared, not for the first time, that the famines were

due, not so much to the failure of the rains, but rather to the heaviness and rigidity of the Government assessments on the cultivators. To the uninitiated it may appear that the contention was transparently untenable, and that between failure of rain and failure of crops there could be no intervening circumstance. The case was, however, plausibly presented. It was argued that the Government took so much from the peasant or his representatives that he was left "resourceless and incapable" in periods of drought. Specific attacks were made upon the system in vogue in different provinces, and the Government were asked to institute changes which would have cut at the roots of their land administration. The onslaught was persistent, and had official precedent been observed, it would for the most part have been treated with silent disdain, in which case the consequences might have been extremely mischievous.

The assailants were reinforced by a number of retired civilians in England, who carried some amount of weight at home. Their protagonist was, however, the late Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, an eminent Bengali who had risen to high place in the Civil Service. I knew Mr. Dutt, and believe him to have been a man of great sincerity of conviction. In after years he was given a prominent position in the State of Baroda, where he seemed to have found that it is not always easy to reconcile political theory with administrative practice. His criticism was delivered in a series of open letters to Lord Curzon, and they attracted widespread attention. Mr. Dutt invariably wrote with notable moderation, but as is the case with many Indian controversialists, his handling of facts and his methods of statement often failed to stand close scrutiny. His letter on the Bombay revenue system, in particular, was quietly but convincingly demolished by Sir John Muir-Mackenzie, though the Bombay case was at that time the most vulnerable of all in certain respects. Throughout his series of papers, it was noticeable that Mr. Dutt was mainly championing the cause of the well-to-do. He said a great deal

about Government exactions from *zemindars*, or landlords, but not one condemnatory word against the notorious excessive exactions of many *zemindars* from their tenants. The initial flaw in his whole case concerning famine was that a very large proportion of the people who had received famine relief were landless labourers and tribesmen from the jungle, who paid no land revenue. A curious feature of all Indian political agitation is that the very poor have no spokesmen or protectors save the Government, and (counting their dependents) there are over thirty million field labourers and sixteen million general labourers in India.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the diatribes of Mr. Dutt and his followers were not wholly without foundation. Had there been no faults to rectify, Lord Curzon's land revenue policy would have required scant discussion here. In his famine tour in the Bombay Presidency, the Viceroy had noticed a disposition in some districts to persist in the revenue demand without sufficient regard to the diminished resources of the cultivators. There were other evils less manifest but not less serious. Settlement officers in some provinces, in their task of reassessing particular areas, had come to think, not always without reason, that to preserve the good opinion of their superiors it was advisable to raise assessments whether local conditions warranted them or not. It is now admitted, for instance, that the resettlement of various districts in Gujerat in the late nineties was unduly high, even although the province is a rich one. The trouble caused by an excessive demand was accentuated when Indian subordinates resorted to irregular methods of collection, as was disclosed at an official inquiry in 1901 in the Surat District. Proof was then given that minor officials had beaten ryots, improperly seized ornaments, sealed up houses, and attached money given for charitable relief, in their undue zeal to collect Government dues. More recently, and long after Mr. Dutt's agitation was over, there was the case of the new settlement of the Rawal Pindi District, in

which the Punjab Government increased the assessment of their own settlement officer. Their action was a contributory cause of the ill-feeling which produced a riot at Rawal Pindi in 1907. Mr. Dutt may have been on unsound ground when he attributed famine to high assessments, but he was not wholly wrong in his criticism. On the whole, the agitation in which he participated had beneficial results. It was time that a softer atmosphere was imparted into methods of land revenue administration, and while defending the broad principles of Government policy, Lord Curzon did not hesitate to administer the necessary corrective.

The Resolution embodying the land revenue policy of the Government of India, which is now an historic document, was issued on January 16, 1902. It soon became known that, contrary to the usual practice, the Resolution had been drafted by the Viceroy himself, for on every page it bore the impress of his clear thought and trenchant argument. Hitherto land revenue policy had been traceable only in innumerable codes and reports and acts. There was no definite and concise official statement of the aims which the Government had in view. But the Resolution at once became a guide for revenue officers, while at the same time it largely silenced the agitation which had arisen. Ever since its appearance, there has been remarkably little recurrence of the cry of over-assessment; and when the United Provinces were stricken with grave scarcity in 1907–08, no one had the hardihood to declare that famine conditions had been produced by the land revenue demand.

The famine theory was, indeed, easy to disprove. It must be obvious that a widespread failure of rain, in a country chiefly dependent upon its crops, is bound to produce abnormal suffering which no financial relief can prevent. Lord Curzon pointed out that in the afflicted Central Provinces alone, successive droughts during a period of seven years had imposed upon the agricultural classes losses estimated at over £26,000,000, a sum equivalent to the land

revenue for fifty years; while the State had spent in these provinces in the relief of distress a sum equal to seven years' land revenue. It was clear, he urged, that even the total abolition of land revenue assessment would not "enable any community to hold up its head against a calamity so vast and so appalling." The increasing intensity of the famines in the later decades of the nineteenth century, as compared with those early in the century, supported his contention. While assessments had progressively diminished, famines had chanced to be more serious, though they ought to have been lighter if the assertions of Mr. Dutt and his associates were true. A cycle of very dry years implies disaster which no Government can avert, though it can mitigate the consequences. Again, the Famine Commission had shown that there was no special intensity of famine in districts which were admitted to be highly assessed, whereas districts where the demand was comparatively small had in some instances suffered severely. Further, there was not the slightest reason to suppose that if the Government abated its dues, the people would husband the resources thus left to them. Their habitual improvidence led to a contrary conclusion; and it must be added here that though this particular argument is not in itself a justification, those who know the Indian villager will recognise its weight. There was nothing left of the famine theory when the Resolution had finished with it.

With similar cogency, the Resolution disposed of the suggestion that the Permanent Settlement had been any protection against famine in Bengal, and that its extension would produce such results elsewhere. It examined the standard upon which assessments were based, confuted the general allegation of excessive demand, defined with technical detail the limits which were observed, and demonstrated that progressive moderation was the keynote of the policy of the Government. It very properly defended the principle of subjecting the land tax to a moderate surcharge for

certain local purposes, including the construction and maintenance of roads. Such charges are assessed on rental value in many countries.

The practical reforms foreshadowed in the Resolution included the graduated imposition of large enhancements of land revenue. In some provinces, when a new settlement was made, the cultivator became liable for the whole increase at once, and his income was therefore violently affected. Lord Curzon thought that the enhancement should be made by prescribed degrees. A reform of far more general importance, which became the cardinal feature of Lord Curzon's land policy, was indicated in his proposal that the revenue demand should be varied to meet the character of the season. The theory of land revenue assessment is that it is based on an average season. The likelihood of good and bad seasons is taken into account, and a rate is fixed which is supposed to be not oppressively high in a bad season, while leaving an exceptional margin in good years. The ryot is expected in a fat year to prepare himself for reverses in a lean one. In practice he rarely does so, and Lord Curzon considered that there should be a greater elasticity of demand, for which the rules did not then provide. This was the origin of his subsequent Suspensions and Remissions Resolution. Similar proposals had been frequently made, but had always been met by the objection that there were many difficulties. A marked characteristic of Lord Curzon's Administration was not so much that he advanced new ideas, but rather that he took up reforms which had been talked about for years, and carried them through. Neither the North-West Frontier Province nor the partition of Bengal were novel proposals. The difference was that while many had thought of these schemes, he accomplished them. He is a man who does things.

The third reform upon which Lord Curzon insisted was the expediency of meeting local deterioration with prompt relief. Famine, he pointed out, was not the only disaster

which might overtake the cultivator. A village might be decimated by malarial fever, or subjected to other disability. There had been cases in which a reduction of revenue had not been granted till the trouble of the people had been "aggravated by their efforts to provide the full fixed demand." He considered that relief should be given in such cases, even though the strict principles of settlement were thereby violated. In effect, he held that the provincial Governments should think less of their own inflexible system, and more of the needs of communities in special misfortune. There were other modifications of the spirit of land revenue administration. He encouraged the further development of the methods by which resettlement has been simplified, and promised to consider whether the principle of exemption or allowance for improvements could be extended. The Land Revenue Resolution was a warning against harshness in taxation. The views which inspired it are not unworthy of practice even in England. Its beneficent intentions were generally recognised, and nowhere did it receive warmer praise than in the native Press.

It was not until March 1905, after his return from England, that Lord Curzon was able to carry into practice his scheme for greater elasticity of revenue demand in times of famine and scarcity. The intervening period was spent in prolonged consultation with the Provincial Governments, who were not all eager for the abandonment of methods which ensured simplicity of collection without much regard for the condition of the cultivator. There was plainly need for reform. The Famine Commission had pointed out, for instance, that during the terrible visitation in Gujerat in 1900 there was no general declaration of suspension, and the amount "suspended" was simply the balance outstanding at the end of the year. "The action of the Bombay Government," said Sir Antony Macdonnell and his colleagues, "was directly in conflict with the principles which we consider to be vital in times of famine." The

Suspensions and Remissions Resolution of 1905 put an end to the possibility of any recurrence of such rigid treatment of the impoverished. It laid down specific rules for the guidance of the provincial authorities, which were in every respect framed in a compassionate spirit. Suspensions were not ordinarily to be granted unless more than half the crop had failed, but when they were made the people were to be told at once before collection began. Suspended revenue was to be remitted when it became apparent that it would not be collected. The district officer was, where possible, to be given the power to suspend revenue. This was a practical piece of decentralisation; there were to be no delays in granting the boon, thus easing the anxiety of the peasantry. Circuitous references to headquarters were deprecated. In areas where landlords paid the land revenue, care was taken that their tenants should receive due benefit from the remission of demand.

The Suspensions and Remissions Resolution embodied the most practical piece of work which Lord Curzon accomplished in his land policy. Its full effects will only be visible if the country again endures a great famine, but meanwhile it has brought relief to countless humble people in those minor scarcities which are so frequently encountered in India. In his last Budget Speech the Viceroy described the measure as "an act of compassion on the part of the State, but it is compassion in a form little distinguishable from justice." A further Resolution, only promulgated after his departure, prescribed the necessary instructions for the reduction of assessment in cases of local deterioration, and furnished liberal rules for guidance in the exemption of improvements from assessment. Its final revision was one of Lord Curzon's last duties in India.

The brief details of the land revenue measures which I have given may seem commonplace, though not when it is remembered that these dull regulations lighten adversity in over half a million villages.

It is not enough, however, to protect the Indian peasant against the indiscriminating importunity of the tax-collector. When that is done, we are still far from placing him in a position of reasonable security. He has still to be protected against himself. In the old days in India, the small landholder may have been fleeced, but except through the uncertainties of conquest or internal war, he was able to reckon on a fair security of tenure. His land was not wanted, but only the fruits of his toil. He was stripped of all save what he required for bare subsistence, but he managed to keep his holding. He borrowed money, but in a lawless era usurers were restrained from demanding exorbitant interest through fear of summary retaliation.

The coming of the British gradually changed the position. Moderate assessments left a surplus to the landholder, and land became a saleable asset. The proprietary rights proved valuable property. Sir Bampfylde Fuller says that the British Government have raised the selling value of landlords' estates from next to nothing to £300,000,000 sterling. The organisation of the British system of justice smoothed the way for the peasant's creditor. Under the old dispensation the usurer knew that extreme greed might mean death or mutilation. Under the new conditions, he could take his mortgage to court, and evict the debtor at his leisure. He had discovered that land was a safe and profitable investment, and craved to possess it. The improvidence of the cultivators made them an easy prey. A wholesale process of expropriation set in. All over India the cultivating classes were losing their land. The machinery of the British courts worked with blind exactitude, and turned swarms of agriculturists into serfs or landless men.

Nowhere was the expropriation of the peasantry more marked or more rapid than in the Punjab. The wave of prosperity which swept through the Punjab after the Mutiny caused their lands to be coveted. The sturdy men of the North, whom Lord Curzon called "the flower of the

population, and the backbone of the native army," saw their holdings passing from them with the tacit consent of the Government. That their eviction was usually the result of their own recklessness and ignorance did not mitigate the blow. The prospective ruin of the cultivating classes of the Punjab was described so long ago as 1886 by Mr. S. S. Thorburn, an able civilian, in a book entitled "Musalmans and Moneylenders." His protest had no very definite result for some years, though he was allowed to make inquiries and to collect evidence. To Lord Elgin, who took a sincere interest in agricultural questions, belongs the credit of first dealing with the evil in a practical way. He formulated proposals to restrict the right of land transfer, which were still in a tentative form when Lord Curzon arrived.

Nine months after Lord Curzon assumed office a Bill was tabled at his instance dealing with land alienation in the Punjab. It underwent revision during the following year, and became law in October 1900. Its broad effect is that moneylenders, shopkeepers, and professional men cannot buy land from hereditary cultivators, or hold such land on mortgage for more than twenty years, without the consent of the State. Hereditary cultivators can, however, dispose of their land to tribesmen of their own class without restriction. There is an intermediate class of "agriculturists," not of the hereditary type, which by virtue of long connection with landed interests has received certain privileges under the Act. An important provision is that the land of an hereditary cultivator cannot now be sold in execution of a decree. Lord Curzon summed up the result of the measure when he said that Shylock could no longer take his pound of flesh in land; and if he was only its foster-parent, the fact remains that he had to wage a vigorous fight in its behalf, and that the chief obstacle he encountered was the lukewarmness of the Punjab Government. At that period the Punjab authorities had lost something of the spirit of their predecessors, and had become rather narrow and reactionary.

The Punjab Land Alienation Act has, I think, more than justified the hopes of its promoters. Both sales of land and mortgages have been greatly reduced, and the extent of land annually redeemed from mortgage has risen to a remarkable degree. The Financial Commissioner of the Punjab reported in 1910 that for some years the effect of the Act had been to prevent further loss, and that there was "no manner of doubt that the old land-owning tribes are now year by year recovering part of what had passed out of their hands before 1901." Even more conspicuous has been the decline in litigation concerning land, which the Act was designed to diminish. I was told in Rawal Pindi in 1909 that the local Bar, which had long flourished merrily on lawsuits about land, was nearly ruined, and I saw no tears shed for its fate. Necessarily the original Act has flaws, which are gradually being remedied in practice. Evasions are not unknown, and prohibited persons are suspected of buying land in the name of servants who happen to be hereditary cultivators. The *Pioneer* in 1907 described the measure as "an heroic protest against the survival of the fittest," and was inclined to doubt whether it would prosper or endure. I can only say that when I last visited the Punjab, if the indignation of the lawyers and merchants who were no longer able to reduce cultivators to the level of rack-rented tenants was any criterion, the Act has met with conspicuous success. Lord Curzon sufficiently answered the application of the theory of evolution to practical politics when he asked in the debate on this very Act what would have become of the boasted progress of the nineteenth century if social and agrarian evils had not been rectified by legislation. The remedy adopted may be artificial, and the restriction upon land investments in the Punjab has unquestionably produced much ill-feeling in the legal and mercantile communities; but it has saved the peasantry of the countryside from social extermination.

The subsequent application of the Act to the district of

Bundelkhand, in the adjacent United Provinces, has not yet been attended with quite the same measure of success; but there can be little doubt that it serves as a model which will in course of time be applied, in varying forms, in other parts of India. A beginning has been already made in the Bombay Presidency, where, in spite of Agriculturists' Relief Acts, the expropriation of the cultivator has been also proceeding apace. The Famine Commission reported in 1901: "We think it probable that at least one-fourth of the cultivators in the Bombay Presidency have lost possession of their lands; that less than a fifth are free from debt; and that the remainder are indebted to a greater or less extent." Lord Curzon was well aware of the defects existing in the Bombay Presidency. Lord Northcote was in ample sympathy with his representations, but the faults of the Bombay revenue system were too ingrained to be rapidly eradicated. Though attempts were made, it was some years before success was attained.

Lord Curzon, then, had devised methods for quickly relieving the ryot from oppressive taxation in times of scarcity, and had set in motion measures designed to prevent him from ruining himself and losing home and land through the exactions of usurers. It remained to imbue him with those principles of self-help of which he stood so sadly in need. At times he required access to capital in order to buy seed or implements, to effect improvements in his land, and to tide over bad seasons. It was good to have dealt a blow at the money-lender, but plainly he was still an almost indispensable adjunct of the village organisation. The Government of India never intended to destroy the money-lender, of whose useful functions they were well aware. They only wished to stop the new movement which, in consequence of the rise in the value of agricultural land, seemed likely to bring about the ruin of rural India by severing the cultivators from their holdings. It was desirable, however, to supplement the money-lender, wherever pos-

sible, by furnishing the ryot with an easier and cheaper means of obtaining capital in emergencies. Something had been already done in this direction. The Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879, though passed for a special purpose, was really the parent of a number of measures intended to give aid to cultivators by advancing money on easy terms. The value of these Acts was considerable, particularly in the Bombay Presidency, where the practice of making advances had attained extensive dimensions. But they had the defects inseparable from purely State aid, and rather than face the stringent regulations with their delays and the inevitable vails, the peasants still often preferred to borrow from the village *bania.* The time had come when the rural classes had to be shown how to work out their own financial salvation.

Sir William Wedderburn had tried twenty years before, when he was attached to the Bombay Government, to start an agricultural bank at Poona. He was stopped, oddly enough, by Lord Kimberley, then Secretary of State, who disapproved of the degree of State aid implied in the scheme. Sir Raymond West published a scheme about the same time, with no better success. In 1892 Sir Frederick Nicholson was entrusted by the Madras Government with the task of drawing up a scheme of land and agricultural banks. His report was a masterpiece of laborious research, admirable in conception and execution, and including a careful study of the co-operative institutions existing in Europe. It was duly published, and much discussed, but appeared likely to grow dusty on secretariat bookshelves. In 1900 Mr. H. Dupernex, a civil servant who had visited France and Italy to examine the co-operative popular banks in those countries, published an excellent little book entitled "People's Banks for Northern India." The views of both these officers came under the notice of Lord Curzon, who was at that time casting about for further expedients for relieving the peasantry from their load of

perpetual indebtedness. He saw in their proposals the solution he sought. They were called to Calcutta, and in due course a scheme of co-operative credit societies was started which seems destined to revolutionise rural finance in India. To me the astonishing success of the co-operative credit movement is the most hopeful sign now visible in India. We wanted to do something for the man on the land, and we have done it. We are teaching him one of the greatest of all lessons—how to help himself.

The care with which Lord Curzon made his preparations for passing the Co-operative Credit Societies Act offers a signal example to those statesmen in England who try to force gigantic schemes of social legislation through the House of Commons in a few weeks. He had the initial advantage of the monumental investigations of Sir Frederick Nicholson, the quiet Madras civilian who was so zealous for the success of the movement that after his retirement he went back to India to encourage villagers in the south to start societies. The Viceroy spent several months in consulting the provincial Governments, after which a committee assembled at Simla under the presidency of the late Sir Edward Law, to thrash the matter out. Further consultations with the provinces followed, and it was not until more than two years had been devoted to examining the question in all its bearings that the Bill was drafted. It was introduced into the Legislative Council in October 1903, and became law in March 1904. It reached the Council, not as a sketch to be hacked about at will, but rather as an elaborate scheme deliberately thought out.

There were prophets of woe, who are never lacking in India. Some of the Indian members were frigid, and declared that their countrymen did not possess the necessary spirit of co-operation. Even Sir Denzil Ibbetson, who was in charge of the Bill, was a little dubious, and observed that he felt by no means certain of success. He was firmly convinced, however, that the Government should make the

experiment. After the Act was passed progress was very slow at first. Experienced and sympathetic officers were converted into missionaries, and perambulated the villages explaining in simple terms the meaning of the new project. One or two societies were experimentally started in each province, in order to show how they should be organised. Then success came with a rush, and the suggestion that Indians were devoid of the co-operative spirit was triumphantly disproved. In 1911, at the end of seven years' working, there were 3456 societies with a membership of 226,958 persons, and a working capital of £686,000. Out of that sum, the State had been called upon to provide only £46,000. The rest had been found by the people themselves. Germany, the land to which we are all exhorted to turn for lessons in statecraft, can show no such example of rapid growth. The first twenty years' working of the Prussian Co-operative Law only produced 1729 co-operative credit societies.

It is not suggested that the co-operative credit movement in India has solved the problem of agricultural indebtedness, for at present it is still in its infancy; but there is every reason to believe that in course of time it will go far towards placing the ryot on a secure foundation. Its rate of growth is unusual in a country where changes are extremely gradual, and where every innovation is regarded with suspicion. The annual co-operative credit conferences now held in most provinces are invariably infused by a spirit of courageous optimism. Sir George Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, speaking at one such conference at Poona in 1910, said that in the extension of the co-operative movement he saw "the only practical means of extracting the people, gradually, but certainly, from the morass into which they had sunk." Mr. Justice Sankaran Nair, at a village conference in the Chinglepet District in February 1911, announced that rural societies had doubled in number in the Madras Presidency during the preceding year. Mr. Carlyle,

introducing a new Co-operative Credit Societies Bill into the Imperial Legislative Council in the same month, said that the movement had made such an extraordinarily rapid advance that a new Act was required. It had become clear that provision must be made, not merely to borrow, but also to "purchase and produce." Co-operative societies framed to include such purposes were now required; and it was essential to facilitate the union of societies in larger bodies so as to secure a better measure of non-official inspection and control, and to assist the raising of funds. Small though the figures I have quoted may sound, they represent a movement which, rightly guided, will probably transform the social condition of the rural population of India in the next three decades. The spirit of self-help and progress which it betokens should be steadily remembered when the news from India sometimes lapses into gloom.

A feature of the original Act was the flexibility it permitted in the formation of societies. Sir Frederick Nicholson recommended societies of the Raiffeisen type, but there are also organisations on the basis propounded by Schulze-Delitzsch, while Burma appears to prefer societies based upon the model which Luzzatti has made popular in Italy. Sir Theodore Morison says that "every province appears to be developing a special type of society adapted to its special social structure." The whole movement is permissive, and the initiative must come, under guidance, from the people themselves. Lord Curzon said in his speech on the passing of the Bill into law that its object was "to foster a spirit of responsibility and self-reliance," and that Government aid would only be forthcoming when necessary. The societies are of two kinds, urban and rural. Urban societies are particularly required to assist such industries as weaving and leather-working. The urban societies are usually on a share basis, with limited liability, while in the rural societies unlimited liability is the rule. The new tendency is to abandon the urban and rural classification, and to make

liability the basis, societies being classified as limited and unlimited. I have seen it sardonically stated somewhere that the unlimited basis is best for the ryot, because by tradition unlimited financial liability has no terrors for him. The real reason why it is best is that it makes the peasants cautious about admission to membership of their societies, and compels them to see that their money is properly spent when loaned. Mr. Justice Nair has stated that membership of a society is coming to be looked upon as a hall-mark of respectability, and that the societies actually exercise "a very wholesome influence in favour of temperance and even total abstinence from drink." In course of time, as the movement grows, the Government guidance now exercised will be gradually lessened. The scheme was not planned, and is not conducted, in a spirit of uncompromising hostility to the village money-lender. He can participate if he likes, but he has to be content with a modest rate of interest.

I have only touched the fringe of a subject of deep interest to all who care for the welfare of India. The establishment of the co-operative credit system was one of those pieces of constructive work which only bore visible fruit after Lord Curzon had left the country. Though he had the aid of many zealous and able officers, it was mainly through his energy and enthusiasm that it was brought into being. He furnished the driving power which gave it life and motion, and on the day that the Act became law he made a stirring appeal to the Indian communities to use it for the benefit of the most deserving and helpless class of their countrymen. "Government has played its part. I invite them to play theirs," were his closing words, and the response which his appeal received in later days has shown that its confident tone was amply justified. Many Indian capitalists have helped the movement, and its operations are constantly being extended into new channels. Some provinces, for instance, have established Central Land Banks, and there are schemes afoot for the organisation of land

banks on the Egyptian model in irrigated areas, for which they are believed to be specially suitable.

Among the other labours of Lord Curzon for the betterment of the people on the land, one achievement stands out in striking prominence. He first introduced the application of scientific inquiry to the needs of Indian agriculture, on a comprehensive and systematic basis. From his Administration dates the beginning of that great movement towards agricultural education which is now visible in every province in India.

The days are past when the association of scientific research with agricultural pursuits stood in need of defence. The United States has taught the world how much a well-organised Department of Agriculture can do for the people on the soil. In Australia I was told that careful experiment and investigation were largely changing agricultural conditions, and bringing into cultivation great areas once believed to be worthless. Every civilised nation has derived benefit from the experimental farm so long maintained by Sir John Lawes at Rothamsted.

The traditional belief about the Indian cultivator was that he knew all that was worth knowing about the capacity of his land and the growing of crops. His implements, it was said, were simple, and his methods crude, but they were suited to his means and to the country. Dr. Voelcker, who made a special inquiry into Indian agriculture more than twenty years ago, did not hesitate to say that in his view "the improvement of cultivation is, in the main, not an agricultural need in India." In the light of later experience, Dr. Voelcker's expression of opinion would hardly command general acceptance, although in some respects his report is still the most valuable document ever drafted on the subject. He made various recommendations, some of which were carried into effect, but with the exception of the appointment of Dr. Leather as Agricultural Chemist, very little scientific work followed his inquiry. Some of the

provincial Governments maintained experimental farms, where investigations were pursued in a tentative fashion. Mr. H. S. Lawrence, who was himself Director of Agriculture in Bombay at a later period, has stated that when Lord Curzon arrived in India the four agricultural institutions existing at Poona, Saidapet, Cawnpore, and Nagpur "were all, broadly speaking, inefficient." In justice to earlier Viceroys, it must be admitted that they were sadly handicapped by lack of funds; but it was not only deficits in the Budget which had blocked agricultural progress. There was a still more patent lack of co-ordination of effort. The notion that a gulf was permanently fixed between the ryot and the results of modern discovery had endured too long. The comfortable gospel expounded by Dr. Voelcker had checked agricultural development, though such a result was very far from his intention.

The day before he left India for ever, Lord Curzon summed up in a speech to the Bombay Chamber of Commerce an answer to his own question: "What have we been doing for agriculture?" He swept aside for the moment his land revenue policy, and the other measures I have described, and said: "Our real reform has been to endeavour for the first time to apply science on a large scale to the study and practice of Indian agriculture." He was fortunate in his chief helper. He found in Sir Denzil Ibbetson, who was at the head of the Department of Land Revenue and Agriculture during the later stages of his Viceroyalty, a loyal lieutenant who shared—and perhaps helped to inspire—his devotion to questions in which the welfare of the bulk of the population was so closely concerned. He had the further advantage of association for five years with a Finance Minister, Sir Edward Law, of whom he once said that he believed he "derived more sincere pleasure from a successful agricultural experiment than he did from the yield of any impost." In such hands the prosecution of a vigorous and beneficent agricultural policy

was at last assured. Its results are written broad upon India to-day. The country which is so largely dependent upon agriculture no longer suffers the reproach that it makes no efforts to develop and improve its staple industry.

Lord Curzon's first step was to appoint, in 1901, an Inspector-General of Agriculture to control and direct the new policy. He chose Mr. J. Mollison, an able Canadian who had shown by his work for agriculture in Bombay that he possessed exceptional qualifications for the task. The new Inspector-General had no executive control over the Provincial Departments, but formed a unifying influence. Around him was gradually grouped a staff of scientific experts; and though their resounding titles sometimes caused a smile, and humble district officers occasionally wondered what particular kind of wild-fowl an "Imperial Mycologist" might be, they were not long in justifying the creation of their appointments. The experts had to be housed, and needed laboratories for their researches. With the £20,000 given to Lord Curzon by Mr. Henry Phipps, and the further donation of £10,000 which Mr. Phipps afterwards added, an Agricultural Research Institute was established at Pusa, in Bengal. The Institute was designed to assist in "the solution of the fundamental problems of tropical agriculture"; and on the day in April 1905 when the Viceroy laid the foundation-stone, he said he wished he could return fifty years hence to see it. Could he do so, he should hope to find Pusa "the centre of a great organisation, with ramifications extending to all parts of the Indian Continent, training a series of native students who will devote their acquired knowledge to the practical pursuit of agriculture, and able to point to the tangible results of successful experiments, both in the quality of seeds and plants, in the destruction of pests, and in improvement of breeds of cattle." The Government added largely to the munificent gift of Mr. Phipps, and among the adjuncts to the Pusa Institute is an experimental farm of 1200 acres of soil on

which almost any crop can be grown. Before Lord Curzon left India, the original scheme for a Research Laboratory had grown into a Central College of Agriculture, which has become the focus of the policy of agricultural development.

The Pusa enterprise coincided with the announcement of an annual grant of £130,000 by the Government of India for purposes of "agricultural research, experiment, education, and demonstration." Much of this sum was handed over to the Provincial Governments, who added to it further annual grants amounting to more than £200,000. All this expenditure has since been materially increased. To the parent organisation at Pusa, similar establishments, including both Colleges of Agriculture and experimental farms, are being added in every province, each under its own Director of Agriculture. Lord Curzon has not had to wait fifty years to see the results of his policy. They may be traced every year in the proceedings of the remarkable Agricultural Conferences, attended by all grades of men from Maharajahs to small farmers, which are now held throughout India. When Lord Curzon went to India, the man who predicted that within a decade 600 representative agriculturists would be meeting in one province alone, all filled with an ardent desire for the improvement of their industry, would have been laughed at as a dreamer. He found Indian agriculture reactionary and unprogressive, and he left it eager to march abreast with the new young countries of the Western hemisphere.

The possibilities of the development of Indian agriculture are endless, despite the occasional fears of soil exhaustion, which have never been demonstrated after twenty years of inquiry. Take the example of cotton. An American, Mr. Patten of Chicago, said he thought that the solution of the problem of shortages in the world's supply of cotton was partly to be found in India, and I believe he was right. The subject of the improvement of the staple of Indian cotton has received intermittent attention for very nearly a

century, but it is only recently that the Government have made much practical advance. The difficulties are great, for the cultivator prefers the coarse staples which can be grown and marketed quickly, and the mercantile community has not been as helpful as it should have been. It is a case for patience and perseverance. Fifteen years ago the Bombay millowners solemnly assured me that they could never spin and weave the higher counts of cotton which to-day they are manufacturing to their own exceeding profit. Nearly seven years ago I made a pilgrimage into the wilds of Sind, in fierce October heat, to see a patch of twenty acres of land which contained the germ of a great experiment. Upon it Egyptian cotton had for the first time been grown with marked success; and though boll-worm and other drawbacks have since restricted the extension of the experiment, there is no doubt that Sind should eventually become a large producer of Egyptian cotton. The province has all the necessary conditions, including a clear dry atmosphere and perennial irrigation. What may be done for cotton may in time be done equally well for many other branches of Indian agriculture. We rightly hear much of the industrial awakening of India, but the agricultural awakening of the country is a portent of even greater significance and promise.

I have left many subjects untouched, and have reserved the cognate questions of famine relief and irrigation for treatment in another chapter; I have said nothing about the reduction of the salt tax, which brought some help to the slender resources of every ryot in the land; but I trust I have adduced sufficient proof of the justice of Lord Curzon's valedictory claim that he left the peasantry of India better than he found them.

V

THE FIGHT FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM

THE greatest controversy of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty aroused hardly an echo in England. I doubt whether many people who take an onlooker's interest in Indian affairs realise to-day that the hardest battle he fought was not about the partition of Bengal nor the administration of the Army. The strife about Bengal was a purely factitious agitation on the part of those who organised it. They used the creation of the new province as a pretext for inflaming the populace. The dispute about Army administration was not waged in the open arena. It was an affair of despatches, and the Indian communities knew very little about it until it was over. The principal conflict of Lord Curzon's term of office, the controversy which produced the greatest bitterness among the leaders of Indian opinion, centred upon his educational policy.

The struggle regarding educational reform furnishes the hidden clue to many of the later episodes of Lord Curzon's Administration. To know its bearings is to comprehend much that followed it. The question was included in his first series of twelve projected reforms, but press of work and other circumstances prevented him from giving it much attention until he had been nearly three years in India. The first sketch of his scheme of changes in the educational system was not published until October 1902. The Bill embodying one portion of the scheme was not introduced for more than a year afterwards. During the intervening period, there was a

marked alteration in the attitude of Indian politicians and of a large section of the native Press.

Until educational reform was placed in the forefront of the political stage, Lord Curzon had enjoyed a far larger share of popularity than usually falls to the lot of an energetic Viceroy bent upon change and improvement. Indians who were engaged in public affairs appreciated the candour with which he took the Indian peoples into his confidence concerning his hopes and aims. The native Press frequently broke into eulogies of the new spirit he had imparted into the Administration. The apostles of the Indian National Congress never mentioned the Viceroy except to pronounce benedictions upon him. Let successive Presidents of that now eclipsed assembly bear their own testimony. In 1899 the late Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt said at the Lucknow meeting of the Congress:

"I honestly believe that no Viceroy ever came out to India with a more sincere desire to work for the good of the people, and with the help and co-operation of the people."

In 1900 Sir Narayan Chandavarkar said at Lahore:

"We have now at the helm of the Government of India a statesman of whom we may justly say that he promises to be all that a Viceroy of India ought to be. That he has won the hearts of the people and that the people trust him goes without saying, and the enthusiastic receptions he met with during his recent tour bear unmistakable testimony to his growing popularity. Lord Curzon has won the hearts of the people, because since he came amongst us as our Viceroy he has been more than a mere abstraction—he has been a flesh-and-blood Viceroy, who, whether he issues Resolutions, or makes speeches on State matters, seems to the people that he addresses *them*, and desires to take *them* into his confidence, and make his presence, his personality, and his energy felt throughout the land."

No testimony of mine regarding the early years of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty could carry a tithe of the weight which attaches to these generous words from one who was then, and remains to-day, among the most honoured men in India. At the Calcutta Congress in 1901 Mr. Dinshaw Eduljee Wacha, a politician whose unselfish public work has long won the admiration and respect even of those who differ from him, actually made an appeal in his presidential address that Lord Curzon's term of office might be extended. He said:

"It is highly expedient . . . when we have a good Viceroy of a practical turn of mind, imbued with a deep sense of his responsibility, and intent on rendering lasting good to the masses, as Lord Curzon seems to be by universal consent, that he should be allowed to remain at the helm of affairs for a longer period than the orthodox five years, so that he may be in a position to achieve all the good which his knowledge and experience may have derived during the first term of his office. It is indeed most curious that a capable Viceroy, who is known to be rendering good, should have to lay down his office at the very time, or the psychological moment, when India has the greater need of utilising to her best advantage his previously acquired experience."

In his concluding remarks Mr. Wacha avowed that Lord Curzon's zeal for the advancement of the general welfare of the people was beyond all praise, and that his "uniform sympathy and burning desire to hold the scales even" were "unquestionable."

When the Congress met at Ahmedabad in 1902, the report of the Universities Commission had been issued, and the atmosphere was becoming disturbed; but Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, the President for the year, who is no apologist for those in authority, was able to say that "throughout this controversy" the attitude of the Viceroy had been "eminently conciliatory."

It was not until the Benares Congress of December 1905 that Mr. Gokhale discovered that Lord Curzon had been "trampling systematically" on the opinion of the educated classes; while by 1907, at Surat, in a speech which remained unspoken in consequence of a memorable free fight, Dr. Rash Behari Ghose intended to declare, and afterwards announced through the obliging newspapers, that Lord Curzon "left undone everything which he ought to have done, and did everything which he ought not to have done." I need not ask forgiveness for this little incursion into the annals of a body which I have long regarded with the deepest interest. Chronologically it is instructive, and has a direct though not manifest connection with the subject of this chapter. For four years the Presidents of the National Congress praised Lord Curzon; then there was silence; and it was not until he had left the country for ever that the presidential denunciations resounded.

The world, then, wore a rosy hue until Lord Curzon ventured to lay hands upon the system of higher education, mechanical, lifeless, perverted, with which India had been endowed. That system was gradually passing from the guidance of the Government into the hands of cliques who were bending it to their own ends. The University Senates had become the playgrounds of politicians who thought that by seizing the control of national education they could serve ulterior purposes of their own. When they saw the figure of the Viceroy in the doorway they knew that their hopes were shattered. The clamour began.

Even then the storm did not gather much strength for some time. There were meetings of protest, and portentous resolutions from political associations, but it was not until towards the end of 1903, when the Universities Bill was before the Legislative Council, and Lord Curzon's first term of office was drawing to a close, that excitement rose to fever heat. During his absence in England, the agitation against the measure, which had meanwhile become law, was

sedulously continued; and long before he returned it had become abundantly clear that the opponents of the Act had determined to lose no opportunity of showing general hostility to his Administration. The Universities Act, however much it was disliked by political and intellectual India, was not a measure which left very much opening for an appeal to popular passion. But the impending partition of Bengal provided the necessary pretext, and the men who resented the curtailment of their baneful influence in educational matters found in an innocent administrative rearrangement the chance for a mischievous crusade.

Most of the animosity of Indian politicians against Lord Curzon dates from the appearance of the Universities Bill. No one knew that fact better than he did himself. In closing the debate on March 21, 1904, when the Bill was passed, he said:

"I will not go back into the old story of the state into which University Education had fallen in India. When I first came out here, I was implored to take it up by many of those who have since fought the hardest against the changes for which they then appealed. Nothing would have been easier than to let it alone. Matters would merely have gone drifting along. The rush of immature striplings to our Indian Universities, not to learn but to earn, would have continued till it became an avalanche ultimately bringing the entire educational fabric down to the ground. Colleges might have been left to multiply without regard to any criterion either of necessity or merit; the examination curse would have tightened its grip upon the life of the rising generation; standards would have sunk lower and lower; the output would have steadily swollen in volume, at the cost of all that education ought to mean; and one day India would have awakened to the fact that she had for years been bartering her intellectual heritage for the proverbial mess of pottage, and no more. My honourable colleague, Mr. Raleigh, and I set ourselves to defeat this destiny."

No one who has watched Lord Curzon's public career

will believe that he would ever blench from an obvious duty through fear of arousing hostility. Had he taken the easy course, he would have shrunk from touching educational reform at all, and might have left India hearing only "the long waves of acclamation roll"; but if he had done so, he would have been untrue to his high mission. There was no question in India more urgently in need of attention, and he grappled it firmly, well knowing the risks he ran. In spite of all his struggling, he did not achieve a final settlement. I do not think any impartial observer who contemplates the educational system of India to-day can deny that it is still very far from satisfactory. Lord Curzon's own estimate of his educational work was perhaps unduly high. He made many admirable reforms, and he indicated the lines of further progress, but he never fully appreciated the magnitude of the obstacles arrayed against him. He was compelled to leave much undone, for the task was enormous. Those who came after him lacked his indomitable energy, and the forces of reaction gathered fresh strength. The feeling among the best educationists in India now is, not that he was drastic, but that he was not half drastic enough. His work remained a torso, which others are now labouring upon with painful slowness; but had he devoted all his years in India to educational reform alone, he would not have completed the undertaking, so great is the work to do, so protracted the process of accomplishment.

I should be doing injustice to both parties in the education controversy if I left the impression, which I fear I may have conveyed, that political motives were prominent, at any rate in the earlier stages. They existed, but on the whole they were incidental. Lord Curzon told the Educational Conference which met at Simla in 1901 that "the Government desire, with an honesty of purpose that is not open to question, and with aims that few will contest, to place the educational system of the country upon a sounder and firmer basis." If in the course of his efforts he found it

necessary to cleanse and purify the system of government of the Universities—for that, after all, was the head and front of his offending—he did so merely as part, and not necessarily the most important part, of a far greater enterprise.

On the other hand, it is difficult to suppose that Indian politicians had consciously set out years before to "capture" the Universities. That would be to credit them with a degree of astuteness which I do not think they have ever possessed. They had drifted into a position of undue influence in the Universities, and had contracted the habit of using that influence for purposes not likely to promote better education, owing to the somnolence of the Government. Only a few among them had begun to perceive, and in some respects deliberately to exercise, the dangerous power they had acquired by the default of the authorities. When reform was seriously proposed they saw in a flash that their influence was menaced, and at once became hostile.

Other considerations were also at work. Some Indian political leaders were interested in private educational institutions affiliated to the Universities, and the Senates of which they were the masters controlled the right of affiliation. They were not willing to impair their almost autocratic right to decide upon questions of affiliation. Then they saw that if the conditions of instruction were changed the Universities would not form quite such a ready passport for admission to the public service, and they had been always eager to make it even easier for their nominees to enter State employment. Behind these fears lay the growing conviction that Lord Curzon was bent upon restricting the opportunities for higher education open to young Indians. The idea was a ludicrous travesty of his real intentions, but it was seriously entertained, and did much to stimulate opposition to the Universities Bill. Educated Indians sincerely thought that the Viceroy meant to deal a blow at the University system, and many of them were never

able to understand from first to last that his sole object was to make it more efficient.

It is not my purpose, in dealing with this aspect of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, to pen a general dissertation upon the thorny question of Indian education. No topic connected with India has been written upon so interminably, or as a rule with so little profit. Whether it is approached by Englishmen or Indians, it almost invariably seems to produce the same results, for it stimulates prolixity, tends to the development of the most dogmatic opinions, develops bitterness in the most unexpected quarters, and frequently ends by becoming enveloped in a curious vagueness of thought. One would have imagined that the great problem of leading multitudinous races towards a higher intellectual level, and a nobler standard of life, would have induced a "sweet reasonableness," and an amiable unity of purpose, in those who contemplated it. With a fairly wide experience, I can testify that usually it has the reverse effect, and that those who study the question of Indian education generally discover that they have entered upon a battlefield, in which there is a strong temptation to exchange blows with the best. It is a temptation which I propose to resist so far as possible, for I am only concerned here with the humbler duty of narration.

Lord Curzon, when he first became Viceroy, did not appear to be fully aware of the condition into which Indian education had lapsed. On taking his seat as Chancellor of the Calcutta University, a very few weeks after his arrival, he told the graduates that he believed the existing system to be "faulty, and not rotten," and said he felt that cautious reform and not wholesale reconstruction should probably be the motto of Government action. At the same time he was not certain that the Supreme Government exercised as genuine a supervision over education as it might do. They had been expecting the plant to flourish, when they had not sufficiently exerted themselves to trim and prune its branches.

The graduates politely applauded, and no one dreamed of the coming storm; but the little remark about the direct responsibility of the Government, uttered five weeks after the Viceroy's arrival in India, contained the kernel of the whole matter.

By the time Lord Curzon again attended the Convocation of the Calcutta University, a year later, in February 1900, his views had undergone notable development. He specially noted traces of laxity in the affiliation of schools and colleges to the Universities, and a "tendency sometimes to increase the number of the affiliated without due regard to the character of the teachers, the quality of the training, or the degree of discipline." There could be no mistake about the warning contained in the following passage:

> "To call upon the State to pay for education out of the public funds, but to divest itself of responsibility for their proper allocation to the purposes which the State had in view in giving them, is to ignore the elementary obligations for which the State itself exists. My desire, therefore, is to revindicate on behalf of the State and its various provincial agents that responsibility which there has been a tendency to abdicate, and to show to the world that our educational system in India, liberal and elastic as I would have it remain, is yet not free to assume any promiscuous shape that accident or intention may force upon it, but must conform to a scientific and orderly scheme, for which in the last resort the Supreme Government should be held accountable, whether it be for praise or for blame."

At the time these views were uttered, no prominent Indian, so far as I am aware, called them in question; yet they contain the essence of the Viceroy's subsequent action. In the East it is not uncommon for an audience to applaud sonorous sentiments, though the same people will express the utmost indignation if there is any attempt to translate the sentiments into practice. In later years the claim of

the Government to exercise a larger and more efficient control over education was bitterly resented.

When the Viceroy met the Calcutta graduates for the third time, in February 1901, he had still taken no open step towards a comprehensive reform in the educational system, though he again told them that the Government of India had in view "a more diligent discharge of its own responsibilities." But he had not failed to watch the education question carefully, and in one minor respect he had come to a significant decision. He had, as Chancellor, temporarily stopped the election of Fellows to the Calcutta University; and after an explanation of his reasons he reminded the University "that its primary aims were the dissemination of knowledge and the training for life; and that its powers and resources were given to it, not to satisfy the ambitions of individuals, or the designs of cliques, but to promote the intellectual service of the community at large." Even these pointed observations failed to arouse much apprehension.

That autumn the work began. In September a Conference assembled at Simla "to consider the system of education in India." It included the leading education officials of the country and a number of eminent members of the Government, and the Viceroy himself presided over its deliberations. His labours at this period astonished all who were associated with him. He toiled at every detail of the subject, and spared no pains to investigate it in all its branches. He was then in the full stride of his work, and had reached a question which lay very near his heart. But no frame could stand the strain he imposed upon himself, and his strenuous exertions before and during the Educational Conference left effects upon his health which were never afterwards wholly effaced.

The Conference met privately, and its deliberations were not published. Its privacy was afterwards made the subject of taunts, and there were the inevitable references to the

Star Chamber. These complaints were unjustifiable. The Viceroy explained at the outset that the Conference was an informal and confidential gathering of "the highest educational officers of Government, as well as of the official representatives of our leading Universities." It had not met to devise "a brand-new plan of educational reform"; as the Viceroy had told the Calcutta University nearly two years before, he merely wanted to survey the ground first "in consultation with those who had devoted their lives to the task." Informal though the Conference was, its constitution, though not its privacy, was open to criticism. Every member was a Government officer, save one, Dr. Miller, the veteran Principal of the Madras Christian College; and not a single Indian found a place at the Conference table. Lord Curzon had said in Calcutta that he wanted to ascertain "the trend of authoritative opinion"; what he heard was the trend of official opinion.

The Viceroy opened the Conference with a speech which was addressed not only to his immediate hearers, but to all India. It was in some respects the most remarkable, as it was certainly the longest, speech of his whole Administration. He covered the whole field of Indian education, University, secondary, primary, and technical, and it was apparent that if he had been slow to move he had made an exhaustive private study of the subject. He began by dissociating himself from those who held that the experiment of imparting an English education to an Asiatic people was a mistake. There had been blunders, but the successes were immeasurably greater, and the moral and intellectual standard of the community had been raised. He did not want to disparage and pull down, for his whole object was to reconstruct and build up. They had started by a too slavish imitation of English models, and had never purged themselves of the taint. By making education the sole avenue to employment in the service of the State, they unconsciously made examination the sole test of education.

In India the examination method had been pushed to greater excess than he had come across in any country, except China. A people could not rise in the scale of intelligence by the exercise of memory alone. There was, moreover, a misdirection, and in some cases a waste, of force, and a lack of a common principle and a common aim. He did not hesitate to avow once more the responsibility of the Government. He held the education of the Indian people to be as much a duty of the Central Government as the police of their cities, or the taxation of their citizens. The Government could never abrogate their personal responsibility for the living welfare of the multitudes committed to their care.

Passing to details, he examined the University system, inquiring whether they could be gradually changed from purely examining into teaching institutions; and he discussed the necessity for the provision and inspection of hostels for students. In the government of the Universities, in the constitution and composition of the Syndicates and Senates, there was need for substantial reform. The Senates were unwieldy, and were filled, in the main, not by the test of educational interest, or influence, or knowledge, but by that of personal or official distinction. The Syndicates shared with the Senates the absence of uniformity, with what seemed to him to be even more undesirable results. The Conference would further have to consider whether the academic standard was sufficiently high. At Madras, out of 7800 persons who presented themselves for the Entrance University Examination, certified by their teachers to be fit for the higher courses of teaching, as many as four-fifths were rejected. He asked himself what the value of the school final courses could have been. Some might argue that the tests were too hard, but he preferred to ask whether the preceding stages were not too easy. Yet he had been invited by respectable newspapers to commemorate the name of the late Queen-Empress Victoria by lowering the

standard all round! A system, the standards of which were in danger of being degraded, was a system that must sooner or later decline. They did not want to close the doors of thé Colleges, or to reduce the numbers of their pupils, but it was quality, not quantity, that they should have in view. It was equally their duty to maintain a high standard in the affiliation of Colleges, and to exercise great care and caution in their recognition.

As to secondary education, no doubt the Education Commission of 1882–83 was right in laying down the principle that private effort should be encouraged, and that the Government should gradually withdraw from the direct management of secondary schools; but he thought that secondary education was not yet in most parts in a position to stand alone, and that Government institutions should be continued as models. Primary education, the teaching of the masses in the vernacular, opened a wider and more contested field of study, and in that respect he thought the Government had not fulfilled its duty. "Ever since the cold breath of Macaulay's rhetoric passed over the field of the Indian languages and Indian text-books," said Lord Curzon, "the elementary education of the people in their own tongue has shrivelled and pined." Though he stoutly urged the claims of primary education, he protested against being exposed to the misapprehension that he was therefore disparaging higher education. He regarded both as equally the care and duty of the Government; but it could not be right that three out of every four country villages were still without a school, and that less than one-fifth of the total boys of school-going age were in receipt of primary education. The Viceroy afterwards discussed technical education, by which he meant "that practical instruction which will qualify a youth or a man for the practice of some handicraft, or industry, or profession"; and such kindred topics as training colleges, the recruitment of the Educational Service, female education, and moral teaching. He closed by referring

to the desirability of creating a Director-General of Education, some one who would "help them to secure that community of principle and of aim without which they went drifting about like a deserted hulk on chopping seas."

I have treated this speech at some length, because it still constitutes the best exposition of the aims which inspired Lord Curzon when he actively inaugurated the work of educational reform, and because it discloses their purity and loftiness. I would lay special stress upon his disagreement with those who think that the introduction of English education into India was a mistake. Macaulay was right in principle, though wrong in method. Had we not unlocked for the peoples of India the stores of Western learning, they would have forced the gates open for themselves. They would never have been content to browse for ever amid the shady and venerable groves of Sanskrit literature. The West had burst asunder the barriers they had reared against intrusion ; and it was to the West that they naturally turned for new light and fresh guidance. We may have forged the key which has opened the flood-gates against us, but we could not well have done otherwise. Three hundred millions of people could not have been left in intellectual bondage. Too many Englishmen in India are wont to decry the whole system of education and its results. I appreciate, but cannot endorse, the feelings which lead them to echo the sentiment which Aunt Butson inscribed upon the blackboard when she closed the school at Shining Ferry.

The inquiries of the Educational Conference were, it was understood, punctuated by a series of resolutions, in which the necessity for University reform was prominently urged. Lord Curzon had already made up his mind that the Conference must be followed by a more public inquiry, and on January 27, 1902, the constitution of a Universities Commission was announced. The Commission was appointed to inquire into the conditions and prospects of the Indian Universities, to report upon proposals which might improve

their constitution and working, and to recommend such measures as might tend "to elevate the standard of University teaching and to promote the advancement of learning." It was presided over by Mr., now Sir, Thomas Raleigh, the Legal Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, who had a leading share in working out the details of Lord Curzon's educational policy. A Fellow of All Souls, a former Oxford lecturer and professor, and an ardent believer in the highest type of University training, Sir Thomas Raleigh was well equipped for his task. The members of the Commission included Mr. Syed Hossain Bilgrami, a distinguished Mahomedan who was Director of Public Instruction in the Nizam's dominions, and who afterwards became the first Moslem member of the Secretary of State's Council. When the Hindu community complained that it was unrepresented, Mr. Justice Guru Dass Banerjee, of the Calcutta High Court, was added to the Commission, and at its close he signed a Note of dissent.

The Commission made a three months' tour, visiting all the Universities, and a number of affiliated colleges, and two months afterwards, in June 1902, it presented its report. It was complained afterwards that its proceedings were hurried, but there was little foundation for the charge. It examined 156 witnesses, and the issues it had to decide were not recondite. Upon its recommendations the Universities Bill was based.

The principal reforms advocated by the Commission included a reduction in the size and a change in the constitution of the Senates, steps which were, indeed, badly needed. The Senate of the Allahabad University numbered 82, that of Lahore 104, of Calcutta 180, and of Madras 197, while the Bombay Senate had actually been swollen to 310. The conditions existing in Bombay were extraordinary, as I can testify. The local Government and the University authorities alike had apparently lost all recollection of the reasons for which the honour of Fellowship was instituted.

It was regarded as a minor distinction, useful for staving off importunate people who craved recognition, and ranking with, but after, the then (though no longer) equally empty honour of enrolment as a Justice of the Peace. Academic qualifications were not the slightest passport to selection, and sometimes were even a hindrance. There were Fellows so illiterate that they could hardly sign their own names.

Changes in the constitution of the Syndicates were also advised. The Commission further recommended that the territorial limits of the jurisdiction of Universities should be defined, and that no new Universities should for the present be created; that stringent conditions for the recognition of affiliated institutions should be imposed; that the Universities should conduct no school examinations whatever; and that the examination system should be revised and simplified, and examination by compartments abolished. It urged that the minimum age for matriculation should be sixteen, though the Government, in a covering Resolution, showed a preference for fifteen. As to the recognition of schools, it was also recommended that the privilege should be granted only to schools which were certified to conform to the rules of the Education Department, or in the case of unaided schools, to rules framed by the University. The Commission said that there should be insistence on the better equipment of affiliated colleges, and supervision of the places of residence of students. Three recommendations which aroused great hostility were: (1) that a minimum rate of college fees should be fixed; (2) that second-grade colleges (teaching only up to the Intermediate examination of a University) should be gradually abolished; (3) that the system of teaching law by law classes attached to Arts colleges should be modified. The Government of India was not in complete accord with any of these recommendations, though it instituted inquiries regarding the possibility of the more general establishment of central law schools.

The report of the Commission and the comments of

the Government upon it were published in October 1902, and were at once subjected to severe attack. A meeting of protest was held in the Calcutta Town Hall, and Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee has drawn a characteristic picture of the "old men, bent down with the weight of years, the representatives of an older school of thought and culture, the products of our pre-University system," who "came tottering to place on record their protest against the recommendations of the Commission." The cry was raised, and embodied in Congress resolutions, that Senates and Syndicates would be "officialised," and that the Universities would be "practically converted into Government Departments." The system of examinations was defended, as was to be expected; for any one who has looked upon the amazing array of examination cells at Canton and Peking, as I have done, must realise that the mnemonic test has some peculiar fascination for the Asiatic mind. The suggested raising of college fees was fiercely condemned as likely to throw difficulties in the way of the higher education of the poor. Many other objections were offered as the agitation grew, but it was always manifest that the proposed cleansing of the system of controlling the Universities was the bitter pill which did most to create opposition.

The organised hostility with which Lord Curzon's schemes of educational reform were met was to a great extent the work of one remarkable man. In India, as in some other countries, the politicians who exercise the strongest influence are not always those who are constantly in the public eye. It was so in this instance, and the man who really stimulated and kept alive the fight against University reform is worth a little attention, for he played a great part in Indian political life during Lord Curzon's Vice royalty, and his influence was not less potent because it was often unseen. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta was at that time unquestionably the strongest and ablest politician in India. Even to-day he still takes a prominent place in public affairs,

though his health has of late prevented him from being either so active or so dominant as in former years. Though his attitude on many questions may have been open at times to strong dissent, he has always commanded deserved respect from opponents and supporters alike. Lord Curzon himself recommended him for the Knight Commandership of the Indian Empire which was bestowed upon him—the date suggests a certain generosity of mind—in 1904.

Sir Pherozeshah Mehta is incidentally a Bombay lawyer, but at the time of which I speak he had long exercised dominating and almost autocratic control in three public bodies—the National Congress, the Bombay Corporation, and the Senate of the Bombay University. In national politics he had been always, and still is, strictly constitutional. In his earlier years he had imbibed the spirit of British Liberalism of the older type, and had sat at the feet of Gladstone and Bright, and his sojourn in England had left an ineffaceable mark upon his mind. Though he went far in later years in his unavailing efforts to retain the Extremist leaders in the Congress fold, he never gave countenance to the doctrines by which their propaganda was ultimately stained. In the Congress he was on the whole a restraining and pacific influence, a reconciler of insurgents, the man who brought the battalions to heel for public inspection. He controlled the Congress for years by sheer force of character and capacity for handling men. The others talked, but in the end he had his way, and his way never exceeded constitutional limits. In the local municipal politics of Bombay he was supreme. He had his own following in the Corporation—of which he was once more the President in 1911—and the city usually had to bow to his imperious will. It is due to him to say that his power was sparingly exercised in municipal affairs, and that by his example he added breadth and dignity to the public life of Bombay.

But though also a member of the Provincial Legislative

Council, and occasionally of the Imperial Council, his most cherished interests lay, perhaps somewhat oddly, in the Bombay University. There he was monarch of all he surveyed, and he valued his power in University affairs far more than the authority he was able to exert elsewhere. The University lay near his heart. He viewed with indignation the proposals for reform, and thought—I am quite sure in all sincerity, and I know him well—that they were misguided. He set himself to stimulate opposition, and succeeded only too well. His friends in Bengal perhaps needed little encouragement from elsewhere; but the persistent antagonism of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta had more to do with the difficulties which Lord Curzon experienced in the later years of his Viceroyalty than any other single factor. The feeling thus aroused eventually swept far beyond the control of its originator, and may be said to have accelerated the decline of his own influence.

For a whole year the report of the Universities Commission underwent heated discussion in the Press and on the platform. On November 2, 1903, the Universities Bill, which had been previously submitted to the Secretary of State, was introduced into the Legislative Council by Sir Thomas Raleigh. In the course of the debates which followed, the Viceroy himself summarised the principal features of the Bill in the following words:

"Its main principle is . . . to raise the standard of education all round, and particularly of higher education. What we want to do is to apply better and less fallacious tests than at present exist, to stop the sacrifice of everything in the colleges which constitute our University system to cramming, to bring about better teaching by a superior class of teachers, to provide for closer inspection of colleges and institutions which are now left practically alone, to place the Government of the Universities in competent, expert, and enthusiastic hands, to reconstitute the Senates, to define and regulate the powers of the Syndicates, to give statutory

recognition to the elected Fellows, who are now only appointed on sufferance, . . . to show the way by which our Universities, which are now merely examining Boards, can ultimately be converted into teaching institutions; in fact, to convert higher education in India into a reality instead of a sham. These are the principles underlying the Bill."

M. Chailley, a quite unprejudiced commentator, has declared that the Act as passed "constitutes the real charter of present-day education in India." Lord Curzon afterwards said of it: "We provide the machinery for reform; but we leave the Universities to carry it out." The Universities were given new governing powers and requested to adopt a policy. That policy has been compendiously defined as intended "to substitute for a system which provides merely for examining students in those subjects to which their aptitudes direct them, a system which compels them also to study those subjects systematically under efficient instruction and supervision." The reformed Senates were to consist of not more than one hundred Fellows, and their tenure of office was in future to be not more than five years; the Syndicates were to be remodelled; and the ultimate decision regarding the affiliation and disaffiliation of colleges, and the recognition of schools, was left in the hands of the Government, who would receive the recommendations of the reformed Universities. Only those students who had completed a course of instruction in an affiliated College could offer themselves as candidates at a University examination. Colleges were only to be eligible for affiliation if they complied with conditions laid down regarding "their governing bodies, the qualifications of their teaching staff, their financial condition, their buildings and accommodation, the possession of a library, facilities for practical instruction in science, and due supervision of students." Affiliated Colleges were to be subject to inspection. The conditions prescribed for them were to be set forth by the Senates in

regulations. Lord Curzon claimed that a very large measure of independence was left to the Senates, and that the real power for the future would be vested in them. His ideal was that of "self-governing institutions watched parentally by the Government in the background." That the Senates still retain very large and effective powers of obstruction is, by the way, indicated by the hostile reception accorded to Sir George Clarke's scheme of reforms in Bombay.

The debates upon the Bill were protracted, and the attack upon it was led by Mr. G. K. Gokhale, of Poona, a talented and eloquent Brahmin, who was the principal spokesman for the "Opposition" in Council during Lord Curzon's term of office. Mr. Gokhale was himself an educationist of considerable repute, an earnest advocate of Indian Nationalist ideals, agile in controversy, laborious in the preparation of his subjects, but somewhat lacking in influence over his political associates. He is now in the forefront of Indian political life, and his countrymen are justly proud of him, yet throughout his career his precise platform and ideals have been rather difficult to define. It must be remembered, however, that his position midway between two schools of thought has been difficult also, and Indian politicians may not unreasonably claim that the charge of instability should not be brought too readily against them. In the matter of the Universities Bill, however, there was no obscurity about the attitude of Mr. Gokhale, for he fought it in uncompromising fashion. Lord Curzon rebutted with much vigour his suggestion that it was the desire and intention of the Government to place the Indian element in a hopeless minority on the future Senates, and closed by asserting that he was not so sanguine as to think that, because they passed the Bill, a new heaven and a new earth would straight away dawn upon India.

The Bill was passed on March 21, 1904, and its provisions were gradually carried into effect. After more than seven

years' working, I doubt whether any of those who opposed it with so much violence would subscribe to the same arguments to-day. No one says now that it was a blow to the cause of higher education in India, whereas many who were at first alarmed are ready to admit with alacrity that it has had admirable results. Opposition to its provisions was long waged, however, and there was even a suit in the Bombay High Court to prevent its operation during the stage of transition. The Government speedily put an end to the obstruction by passing a short validating Act. The intentions of the measure were not achieved without much delay, and in some respects the changes it involved are not complete even now. In more than one Senate the University curriculum remains a fruitful source of disputation. The Bombay University has been involved in a prolonged controversy regarding the matriculation examination. While Senates and Syndicates are almost as combative as ever, the old criticisms of the tendencies of Indian education appear to be offered from other quarters with unabated vehemence. In short, the question of Indian education is still a battle-field, and the day seems likely to be far distant when it will cease to resound with strife. In some provinces the principles laid down by Lord Curzon were only very languidly prosecuted after he left India. The powers of disaffiliation were left too much in abeyance, and the unfortunate resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal, was directly induced by the refusal of the Government of India to disaffiliate two institutions in Eastern Bengal which were believed to have become nurseries of sedition. The growth of subtle seditious propaganda in many schools and colleges is an unwholesome symptom, and the facilities now provided for checking it have been insufficiently used. Yet despite all these drawbacks, there are many signs of progress, and the atmosphere is far healthier than it was when Lord Curzon began his crusade. Among other things, there is now a reasonably

adequate inspection of affiliated colleges and schools. It may be noted that the recommendation of the Educational Conference regarding minimum fees was only adopted in a very modified form; and that one of the subsidiary reforms instituted by Lord Curzon was the partial substitution of principles of selection among candidates for Government service, instead of blind reliance upon examination tests.

I have devoted much space to the contentious episode which signalised the inauguration of Lord Curzon's educational policy; but it has to be remembered that, although the Universities Act was the bed-rock of his reforms, ostensibly it dealt only with one phase of them. His educational work is traceable in many other directions where there was less antagonism. In 1902 he created the post of Director-General of Education, and Mr. H. W. Orange, of the English Board of Education, was the first holder of the office. Mr. Orange has now returned to England, and has become Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools. He had no executive authority while in India, but was adviser to the Central Government on educational matters. He kept them in touch with the local Governments, and, though his position seemed a little anomalous, he did valuable work in co-ordinating the system of education in the provinces. One of his most useful innovations was the creation of a central bureau of educational intelligence. Lord Curzon told the Educational Conference: "I do not desire an Imperial Education Department, packed with pedagogues, and crusted with officialism. I do not advocate a Minister or Member of Council for Education." Others have thought differently, and last year a Ministry for Education was created. Its success will depend very largely upon the degree to which flexibility of policy is permitted to the provincial Governments. It is too soon yet to estimate the value of the new Department, but if any man can justify the change, that man is Mr. Harcourt Butler, the brilliant

civil servant who has become the first Indian Minister for Education.

I do not propose to enter upon a long recital of the work of Lord Curzon accomplished in other parts of the educational field. Were I to do so, I should have to speak in detail of his permanent annual grant of over £230,000 in aid of primary education, in addition to a still larger special grant in 1902; of the thousands of new primary schools which were thereby opened; of his efforts to raise the pay of primary teachers, and of the special agricultural lessons prescribed for village children; of the progress made in providing more competent instructors, and more numerous inspectors, and in reducing examinations in secondary schools; of his recognition of the special requirements of commercial education: of the impulse he gave to the education of Europeans and Eurasians in India; of his labours for technical education, of his schemes for industrial schools, and the technical scholarships he instituted; of the help he gave towards the scheme which arose out of the late Mr. Jamsetjee Tata's munificent bequest for an Institute of Science, now established at Bangalore; of the strengthening of the engineering and law colleges; of the overhauling of text-books which he directed; of his interest in female education; and of the improvements he effected in the Educational Service. To treat of these topics at length would perhaps be wearisome to English readers; but it is necessary to say that, so far as the funds at his disposal permitted, Lord Curzon gave generous help to the cause of primary education in India.

The whole question of primary education is a question of money. Since Lord Curzon's departure, the subject has been very much under discussion, and the interest displayed in it has not always been marked by wisdom or prudence. Two years ago Mr. Gokhale introduced into the Imperial Council a resolution recommending that elementary education should gradually be made free and compulsory throughout

India. This year he has submitted a small permissive Bill empowering District Boards and Municipalities, under certain circumstances, to introduce compulsion into their areas, at first for boys, and, when the time is ripe, for girls also. The Bill provides that instruction shall only be gratuitous in the case of very poor families. The Government of India, on their part, have somewhat incautiously expressed tentative approval of the principle of free primary education, only to find themselves confronted by alarming estimates of its probable cost, and by the almost unanimous disapproval of the local Governments. While primary education remains so partial in India, it is inadvisable to make it free. The minute fees are never a bar to parents who are anxious to have their children educated, for every province has a free list which is never full; and India is certainly not ripe for compulsory education. Sir John Hewett told the Government of India that he thought primary education should become general before it was made free; and that it was not the fees, but the indifference to education, which debarred parents living near schools from sending their children to be taught.

It remains to add that Lord Curzon rounded off his work of educational reform by issuing, on March 11, 1904, a Resolution on Indian educational policy which bore comparison with the similar Resolution on land revenue policy described in the last chapter. It covered every branch of the subject, laid down principles for further guidance, was both concise and comprehensive, and marked the advent of a new era both in the spirit and in the methods of Indian education. No such summary of the educational aims of the British in India had appeared since the memorable despatch of the Court of Directors in the year 1854. Many of its chief points have been already noted; but it is worth recording that it reaffirmed the settled policy of the Government to abstain from interfering with the religious instruction given in aided schools, and to keep the instruction in Government institutions "exclusively secular."

Lord Curzon was not unmindful of the importance of moral training, and spoke at length upon it in 1901; but he saw the immense difficulties of religious instruction in Government schools. His remarkable Resolution has been criticised for its omission to deal more definitely with the question. Deeply conscious though he was of the evils arising from the divorce of education from religion in India, it is permissible to assume that he would not have countenanced some of the remedies which have since been suggested. If I may venture to add my own view, it is that I can see no safe solution of a problem which is nevertheless fraught with grave danger for the future well-being of the people of India.

In taking leave of the Directors of Public Instruction at Simla on September 20, 1905—when he remarked that he felt "rather like a general addressing his marshals for the last time"—Lord Curzon said he did not regret the battle or the storm over the Universities legislation, for he was "firmly convinced that out of them had been born a new life for Higher Education in India." The conviction was justified, but in the light of later knowledge it must be added that, through no fault of its creator, the period of youth has been marked by many ailments. M. Chailley, than whom there is perhaps no more competent critic on this particular subject, has recorded his opinion that in the absence of Lord Curzon, whose tenacity of purpose was needed to guide the measure into law, the reform will languish. I do not take so despondent a view, but I think the confident hopes of 1905 are very far from being realised in many respects, and that Indian education has been only partially reconstructed. Yet the new foundations are there: other strenuous builders are at last at work; and the Viceroy who fearlessly braved unpopularity, and undermined his own health in a noble cause, did not labour in vain.

VI

THE PRINCES AND THE NATIVE STATES

In approaching the engrossing subject of the princes of India, and of Lord Curzon's intercourse with them, I grow conscious of exceeding difficulty. The relations between a Viceroy and the Maharajahs are to some extent delicate and confidential, and in certain respects are rightly not regarded as fitting topics for public discussion. Nevertheless they are by no means secret. If the internal diplomacy of India is not precisely shouted from the house-tops, it is always whispered in the bazaars. The way secrets leak out in India would drive the staff of a European Embassy to despair. I have often said that in that bewildering Empire nothing remains secret very long which is known to more than one person. I was once discussing a confidential State question with a very high dignitary indeed, and in the course of the conversation our voices unconsciously rose. The great man's secretary suddenly entered from a room across the passage, and said he could hear what we were saying. I ventured to remark that it did not matter very much, for we were in an isolated wing of the building, and no one else was near. The secretary stepped on tip-toe across the room, and flipped up the slats of the jalousie. Two of the red-coated myrmidons who pervade the households of the exalted in India had their ears glued to the blind. They were supposed not to understand English, but who shall say? If "Lord Sahibs" do not escape eavesdropping, it is not surprising that in the laxer atmosphere of the native

states everything that occurs soon becomes public property and is carried to the great cities.

It would be idle to pretend, therefore, that the more confidential features of Lord Curzon's relations with the native states, as well as those of the Viceroys who came before and after him, are not common knowledge. India knows very well how certain intricate questions of succession were settled, who were privately deprived of their powers for a space, who were admonished for neglect of duties or extravagance or an undue fondness for the flesh-pots of Europe, who were truculent in claiming sovereign rights, who gave a great deal of trouble, and who gave no trouble at all. Not from lack of information, but because it is not seemly to examine topics which the Imperial authorities have veiled, I shall leave specific cases severely alone. There remain, however, certain issues which by reason of their magnitude and importance could not even at the time be regarded as really confidential. Of such are the conclusion of the Berar Agreement with the late Nizam of Hyderabad, and the abdication of the late Maharajah Holkar of Indore, which may be treated without reserve. To these may be added the questions of policy raised by the Imperial Service Troops, the Imperial Cadet Corps, the Chiefs' Colleges, the foreign travels of certain princes, and a number of other matters affecting many states in common. Beyond these, again, lies the general question of Lord Curzon's policy towards native states, which was emphatic and clearly defined.

Novelists, even some very famous ones, have depicted the native states of India as haunts of mystery and intrigue, full of wild romance and lawless life, and not devoid of iniquity. The romance is still there, and often much of the intrigue, and, though not so commonly as is supposed, perhaps a little of the iniquity also; but the mystery is fast vanishing. Among a collection of native states numbering considerably more than six hundred, all degrees of condition

and environment are naturally still to be found. I have been conducted at an hour approaching midnight, by wild retainers bearing torches, along interminable corridors in a warren of a palace, to the dimly lighted audience-chamber of a prince who interrupted our talk in order to withdraw for prayer; but then I have been rescued at a lonely railway junction by a fairy prince with the dress and language of an Englishman, who appeared from nowhere in particular in a private saloon carriage with a four-post bedstead. I have sat and waited in a far-off state, while my vigilant companions sought to restrain the women-folk of a dying prince from surreptitiously administering powdered diamonds to the moribund patient in the vain hope of cure ; but then I have conversed with an Indian ruler who possessed a British medical degree, earned by hard study, and who combined the gravity of Harley Street with the dignity of minor kingship. I have rested by the wayside in the wilds, while the driver of a princely carriage tied up the shaky conveyance with string, after the fashion of the East ; but then I have been whirled through a native state in the newest and fastest of six-cylinder motor-cars. Native states are in many patterns, and Indian princes likewise.

Even the most progressive native states have an old-world charm about them, of which the visitor is conscious as soon as the borders of British territory are crossed. Allowing for the differences of the Orient, they are, I suppose, very much what some of the smaller German states must have been a hundred years ago. Most of them are now adequately administered, and if the standard of efficiency is often lower than in British India, it usually satisfies the desires, though perhaps not the needs of the people. There can be no doubt, I think, that the majority of the dwellers in native states prefer to remain as they are, rather than come under direct British control. The feeling is almost invariably due to personal loyalty to the chief, for I have found the people in native states generally disposed to say

that British India is better administered, and that the British standard of public morality is higher. "I know I don't govern as well as your people would do," said a jovial Maharajah to me once, "but my subjects would rather see me come through the streets of my capital on an elephant than salaam to a Collector in his buggy." Elephants are rare nowadays, even in the capitals of native states, but the spirit to which the Maharajah alluded remains as strong as ever. Yet it is not quite the old spirit of allegiance which Tod described so vividly in his "Rajasthan." The vague unrest, the disposition to question constituted authority, which has swept over India in recent years, has not left the native states untouched. Many a watchful prince and experienced Dewan have detected changes in the demeanour of their people. They find them as respectful as ever, but more disposed to stand upon their rights and less willing to accept autocratic decisions in blind compliance with their ruler's nod. The Maharajahs are no longer demigods to their subjects.

To do them justice, they do not want to be demigods. The majority of Indian princes are genuinely anxious to govern their states well, and to bring them more into line with the good administration of British India. The old stories of fierce brutality or grinding oppression or reckless extravagance or unbridled excess have comparatively few modern counterparts. Examples still exist, and when they occur they generally create a scandal of exaggerated dimensions; but they are not typical, and the heavy hand of Viceregal displeasure soon falls upon the offenders. Nor is it fair or true to suggest that the rulers of native states build hospitals and maintain schools and colleges, and spend their surplus revenues on public works, for no other purpose than to placate an exacting Resident or to attract the discerning eye of a Viceroy on tour. No doubt they did these things in the early days, and cases are not unknown to-day; but very many princes take a justifiable pride in the public institutions of their states. I have on several occa-

sions, for instance, found the hospitals and dispensaries of a native state far better equipped with appliances and medical stores, and even better staffed with doctors and nurses, than similar institutions in adjacent British districts. In one respect native states have a common and rather amusing peculiarity; for it is rare to visit a state without being invited solemnly to perambulate the well-kept jail. The criminal in a native state is often better cared for than in British India.

The popular English conception of the princes of India stands in need of revision. The Indian Maharajah does not sit down to breakfast covered with diamonds and rubies, and except on state occasions is often conspicuous for the extreme simplicity of his dress. He does not build palaces by the dozen, or order motor-cars by the score; for every case of wilful extravagance on the part of an Indian ruler, I think I could name half a dozen where personal expenditure is limited almost to frugality. The princes should not be judged by their occasional lavishness when they visit Europe. They are then upon a holiday, and like humbler folk are wont at such times to spend money readily. They do not, as a rule, marry with ardent enthusiasm at frequent intervals, though there are exceptions. They mingle with their people far more freely than the minor European princes. I have often been struck by the almost democratic relations subsisting between the prince and his subjects in many native states. A parallel can be found in Russia, which, despite the barriers raised by Terrorism, is in some ways the most democratic country in Europe. It may further be said, most emphatically, that the private lives of the princes and chiefs of India will bear comparison with those of any corresponding body of men in high place anywhere in the world. They include in their numbers the normal proportion of black sheep, but it is extremely unjust that erroneous conclusions should be drawn from the aberrations of a few among them.

The English conception of the political condition and standing of the princes of India is often equally inaccurate. Though many of them have a long lineage, most of their states are comparatively modern. Some of the most powerful of the Maharajahs are sprung from men who only gained land and fame after the British reached India. Their ancestors obtained their possessions by conquest, just as we did ourselves; or they were satraps who revolted against a distant overlord, and made themselves rulers of the provinces they were sent to govern. They are often aliens, having no intimate ties of race with their subjects; and many a native state owes its continued existence and security solely to the protecting arm of the British. In fact, Great Britain's strongest moral claim to sovereignty over the native states is that she has been, in the truest sense of the word, their preserver. The obligations incurred are, however, mutual to this degree, that British rule tends to depend more than ever upon the loyal support and allegiance of the native states. The interests of the Sovereign Power and of the princes and chiefs grow more nearly identical as the years pass. Both are concerned to preserve the existing system, because both realise that failure to resist the enemies of order and good government might plunge them into common ruin. There are very few native states, as at present constituted, which could be expected to survive the disappearance of British rule. On the other hand, the generous loyalty of the princes and chiefs to the British Crown is a solid factor which helps materially to preserve stability at a time when such assurances are of the utmost value. The Viceroy and the Government of India have no more imperative duty than that of maintaining good relations with the native states.

It is, however, a duty beset by many difficulties. The control of Indian rulers who fail to perform the duties they owe to their Sovereign, to their people, and to themselves, is a delicate business requiring constant tact and great

restraint. There are other difficulties which, though technical, are hardly less serious. The relations of the Sovereign Power with the native states are in many cases largely governed by treaties and despatches, some of which are more than a century old. During the gradual extension and consolidation of British control, these relations underwent development and modification. Expressions and phrases, and even undertakings, were inserted in some of the earlier treaties which have small practical application to present conditions. In venerable treaties with maritime states, I have found special injunctions prohibiting chiefs from entering into communication with America, or from sheltering Americans and their ships; but though such clauses have now only an historical interest, a very instant problem is presented by definitions of alliance and relative sovereignty which find little actual currency in modern practice. The treaties endure, and the states are apt to interpret them most literally; and the phraseology of the documents varies to such a degree that it would puzzle the pundits of constitutional law to reduce them to a common denominator. To add to the confusion, there are some states with which the Sovereign Power has no treaties at all. In others the situation is complicated because the chief is himself the overlord of feudatories who exercise varying degrees of territorial jurisdiction within their own estates. Any one who has been compelled to investigate the respective powers and privileges of the Rao of Cutch and his Bhayats, as it fell to my lot to do upon the spot, will appreciate the intricacies of the internal polity of some native states.

The exact status of the princes and chiefs, and the niceties of their relations with the Sovereign Power, are thus tinged with a vagueness about which experts still dispute, and regarding which I do not presume to offer an opinion. The very terminology used in this connection is a constant subject of argument; and it may be useful to

mention that, in the view of some in whose judgment reliance can be placed, the words "ally," "suzerainty," "feudatory," and "federal relationship," are all inapplicable to the relations between the native states and the Crown. It has even been argued that the word "sovereignty" should not be applied to the powers of a ruling chief, though Sir William Lee Warner, whose authority in such matters is generally recognised, takes a contrary view.

I will only say that I think there is an urgent need for greater clarity and uniformity of definition, not only in the interests of the Paramount Power, but still more in the interests of the princes and chiefs themselves. At present some among them, in all good faith, profess a conception of their own independence, with concomitant pretensions to regal honours, which are clearly unfounded. They use alike the language and the trappings of royalty. They speak of their "thrones" and of their "royal family"; and I have been presented to a youth, the heir to a few square miles of territory, who was described to me as "the Heir-Apparent." I have even heard of a case where the Tudor Crown was figured upon table-linen and crockery, though it did not come under my personal notice. These tendencies are intensified by the indiscretions of English society, due to blank ignorance; and they are further encouraged by the apparent reluctance of the India Office and the Government of India to deal with a very awkward question. Many people have heard of the famous Viceregal note which disposed of a formidable file of papers dealing with a case of assumption of royal symbols. It is said to have consisted of two words: "Drop it." But these things are not trifles in the East, and should not be "dropped." If disregarded they may lead ultimately to more serious issues. They require definite treatment and final decision; and it may be hoped that if the whole problem is considered afresh, the privileges and titles of the younger sons of Indian rulers, and of the offspring of younger sons, will receive special

attention. The limited dignity of younger sons is well understood in India, but England has a weakness for "princes," and the visits of cadets of the smaller ruling families are occasionally attended by results which are either absurd or unfortunate.

Lord Curzon held very frank opinions upon the subjects I have been discussing, and took many opportunities of enunciating his views. Were I to quote the whole of his pronouncements upon the native states and their rulers, they would occupy no inconsiderable portion of this book. At different times, in the course of his long Viceroyalty, he discussed in public speeches every important aspect of native state questions. Among these numerous discourses, a quotation may be taken from his speech at the Investiture of the young Nawab of Bahawalpur, because it best illustrates Lord Curzon's conception of the position and the duties of Indian princes and chiefs. He said, on November 12, 1903:

"When the British Crown, through the Viceroy, and the Indian princes, in the person of one of their number, are brought together on an occasion of so much importance as an installation ceremony, it is not unnatural that we should reflect for a moment on the nature of the ties that are responsible for this association. They are peculiar and significant; and, so far as I know, they have no parallel in any other country in the world. The political system of India is neither Feudalism nor Federation; it is embodied in no Constitution, it does not always rest upon Treaty, and it bears no resemblance to a League. It represents a series of relationships that have grown up between the Crown and the Indian princes under widely differing conditions, but which in process of time have gradually conformed to a single type. The sovereignty of the Crown is everywhere unchallenged. It has itself laid down the limitations of its own prerogative. Conversely the duties and the service of the states are implicitly recognised, and as a rule faithfully discharged. It is this happy blend of authority with free will, of sentiment with self-interest, of duties with rights,

that distinguishes the Indian Empire under the British Crown from any other dominion of which we read in history. The links that hold it together are not iron fetters that have been forged for the weak by the strong; neither are they artificial couplings that will snap asunder the moment that any unusual strain is placed upon them; but they are silken strands that have been woven into a strong cable by the mutual instincts of pride and duty, of self-sacrifice and esteem.

"It is scarcely possible to imagine circumstances more different than those of the Indian chiefs now from what they were at the time when Queen Victoria came to the throne. Then they were suspicious of each other, mistrustful of the Paramount Power, distracted with personal intrigues and jealousies, indifferent or selfish in their administration, and unconscious of any wider duty or Imperial aim. Now their sympathies have expanded with their knowledge, and their sense of responsibility with the degree of confidence reposed in them. They recognise their obligations to their own states, and their duty to the Imperial throne. The British Crown is no longer an impersonal abstraction, but a concrete and inspiring force. They have become figures on a great stage instead of actors in petty parts.

"In my view, as this process has gone on, the princes have gained in prestige instead of losing it. Their rank is not diminished, but their privileges have become more secure. They have to do more for the protection that they enjoy, but they also derive more from it; for they are no longer detached appendages of Empire, but its participators and instruments. They have ceased to be the architectural adornments of the Imperial edifice, and have become the pillars that help to sustain the main roof."

A month later, at Ulwar, Lord Curzon further enlarged upon the reciprocal relations of the British Crown and the Indian princes, saying:

"The Crown, through its representative, recognises its double duty of protection and self-restraint—of protection,

because it has assumed the task of defending the state and chief against all foes and of promoting their joint interests by every means in its power; of self-restraint, because the Paramount Power must be careful to abstain from any course calculated to promote its own interests at the expense of those of the state. For its part, the state, thus protected and secured, accepts the corresponding obligation to act in all things with loyalty to the Sovereign Power, to abstain from all acts injurious to the Government, and to conduct its own affairs with integrity and credit.

"I sometimes think that there is no grander opportunity than that which opens out before a young Indian prince invested with powers of rule at the dawn of manhood. He is among his own people. He is very likely drawn, as is the Maharajah whom we are honouring to-day, from an ancient and illustrious race. Respect and reverence are his natural heritage, unless he is base enough or foolish enough to throw them away. He has, as a rule, ample means at his disposal, enough both to gratify any reasonable desire and to show charity and munificence to others. Subject to the control of the Sovereign Power, he enjoys very substantial authority, and can be a ruler in reality as well as in name. These are his private advantages. Then look at his public position. He is secure against rebellion inside the state or invasion from without. He need maintain no costly army, for his territories are defended for him; he need fight no wars, except those in which he joins voluntarily in the cause of the Empire. His state benefits from the railways and public works, the postal system, the fiscal system, and the currency system of the Supreme Government. He can appeal to its officers for guidance, to its practice for instruction, to its exchequer for financial assistance, to its head for encouragement and counsel. He is surrounded by every condition that should make life pleasant, and yet make it a duty."

To these extracts may be added a passage from an address delivered by the Viceroy to the Chiefs of Kathiawar in Durbar at Rajkote on November 6, 1900, when he explained

his views upon the duties devolving on native states in these impressive words:

"I am a firm believer in the policy which has guaranteed the integrity, has ensured the succession, and has built up the fortunes of the native states. I regard the advantage accruing from the secure existence of those states as mutual. In the case of the chiefs and the states it is obvious, since old families and traditions are thereby preserved, a link is maintained with the past that is greatly cherished by the people, and an opening is given for the employment of native talent which the British system does not always or equally provide. But to us also the gain is indubitable, since the strain of Government is thereby lessened, full scope is provided for the exercise of energies that might otherwise be lost to Government, the perils of excessive uniformity and undue centralisation are avoided, and greater administrative flexibility ensues. So long as these views are held—and I doubt if any of my successors will ever repudiate them—the native states should find in the consciousness of their security a stimulus to energy and to well doing. They should fortify the sympathies of Government by deserving them. To weaken this support would be to commit a suicidal crime.

"If the native states, however, are to accept this standard it is obvious that they must keep pace with the age. They cannot dawdle behind, and act as a drag upon an inevitable progress. They are links in the chain of Imperial administration. It would never do for the British links to be strong and the native links weak, or *vice versâ*. As the chain goes on lengthening, and the strain put upon every part of it increases, so is uniformity of quality and fibre essential. Otherwise the unsound links will snap. I, therefore, think, and I lose no opportunity of impressing upon the Indian chiefs, that a very clear and positive duty devolves upon them. It is not limited to the perpetuation of their dynasties or the maintenance of their *raj*. They must not rest content with keeping things going in their time. Their duty is one, not of passive acceptance of an established place in the Imperial system, but of active and

vigorous co-operation in the discharge of its onerous responsibilities. When wrong things go on in British India, the light of public criticism beats fiercely upon the offending person or spot. Native states have no right to claim any immunity from the same process. It is no defence to say that the standards there are lower, and that, as censors, we must be less exacting. That would be an admission of the inferiority of the part played by the states in the Imperial scheme, whereas the whole of my contention rests upon its equality, and the whole of my desire is to make it endure."

I have thought it best to give Lord Curzon's own words, rather than to render his views in a halting paraphrase. In the closing sentences of the last passage quoted, will be found the heart of his policy towards the native states. He claimed for them a high place in the fabric of the Indian Empire, and was not willing that they should fall below it. The standard he prescribed was not always attained, and when a Maharajah failed to fulfil the injunctions laid upon him, he was in danger of admonition. A very great diversity of opinion exists, even among experienced political officers, regarding the merits of Lord Curzon's policy in this respect. All recognise its exalted purpose; some are inclined to doubt its expediency. It is argued against it that there is no real need to bring the states rigidly into line with British India in administrative efficiency; that a lower standard does suffice in native state territory, and that we must be less exacting; and that provided a ruler does not oppress his subjects, or fail to do justice between them, or make his life a public scandal, we can very well leave him alone. To some extent these contentions spring, I think, from that spirit of weariness, the growth of which among British officials in India has been noticeable in recent years. As Great Britain gets to closer quarters with her task, its magnitude appals many of the weaker hearts. It is no uncommon thing to hear a

civilian half-way through his service declare that the work has grown beyond human endurance, and that the best remedy is to divide up all India on the native state pattern. Such sentiments would have filled Lord Curzon with indignation. His whole Viceroyalty was one long protest against the laggards and the languid.

Without endorsing the extreme view that the ordinary administration of the native states calls for very little interference from the British Government, it is still possible to hold that Lord Curzon, in his anxiety to emphasise the duties of partnership, was sometimes led to expect too much. His intense interest in the internal affairs of the states was not always relished by the chiefs, though it had the effect of producing a marked increase of efficiency in states where improvement had become very necessary. Since his departure, the pendulum has perhaps swung too far the other way. Lord Minto, in a speech at Udaipur in 1909, expounded principles which would probably have been expressed differently by Lord Curzon. Lord Minto said he had always been opposed to anything like pressure upon Durbars with a view to introducing British methods of administration. He preferred that reforms should emanate from Durbars themselves, and "grow up in harmony with the traditions of the states." Administrative efficiency was not the only object to aim at. Though abuses must as far as possible be corrected, political officers would do wisely to accept the general system of administration to which the chief and his people had been accustomed. The methods sanctioned by tradition in the states were usually well-adapted to the needs of the ruler and his people. "The loyalty of the latter to the former was generally a personal loyalty which administrative efficiency, if carried out on lines unsuited to local conditions, would tend to impair."

Lord Minto's speech was somewhat indiscreetly hailed in the Press as "amounting to a reversal of Lord Curzon's policy," and it has been interpreted since with a liberality

which is probably beyond the intention of the speaker. I am not at all sure that the administrative traditions of the native states are in all respects worthy of preservation. Judging by the records of the past, they are not. Nor does it seem likely that a wise increase of efficiency would impair the loyalty of the people towards their chiefs. If that argument is to be accepted literally, as is now the case in some states, there will be no further improvement at all. The best solution probably lies in a course which will make somewhat less exacting demands than Lord Curzon prescribed, without lapsing into the attitude of passivity which Lord Minto appeared to prefer.

Nevertheless, I have a good deal of sympathy for the line of thought which evidently inspired Lord Minto's speech at Udaipur. The time has come when we must be more careful than ever when intervening in the purely internal affairs of native states. We cannot, on the one hand, announce our intention of giving greater liberty to the people of British India, and on the other, turn the screw upon the Indian princes. Political officers must be content to watch and advise, and to check when necessary, and must not seek to control. The issue at Simla of orders intended to be of general application is specially to be deprecated. There are so many variations in the native states, and their degree of advancement fluctuates so widely, that each problem should be treated separately. General orders may suit British India very well, but they should be sparingly applied to the states. In the relations with native states personality counts more than any other factor; and progress can still be best achieved through the personal influence of political officers, working in friendly confidence with the chiefs. There is nothing in these sentiments at variance with the policy which Lord Curzon laid down. He, too, wanted reforms to emanate from the Durbars themselves, and his main purpose was to encourage the chiefs to perform their own duties, turning only to political officers for friendly advice.

In one respect the attitude of the Government of India towards native states requires frank comment. I have shown, in this rough sketch of the position, that in the case of many of the states the rights of the British Government are to some extent determined by treaties, which are occasionally antiquated. The development of the British system has rendered the provisions of some of these treaties a little irksome, and there are times when they block the completion of Government projects. New Departments arise, and inaugurate new policies which pay very little regard to the prescriptive rights of native states. A growing corollary of the theory of Imperial partnership seems to be that the Government is not necessarily bound by treaties which are considered obsolete; or, on occasion, the Government will only admit the validity of treaties with great reluctance, after compelling native states to fight in defence of treaty rights which ought to have been recognised without demur; or, to mention another situation which sometimes arises, the Government will shelter themselves behind the letter of a clause, taking the possibly disputable opinion of their law officers as final, and will pay no regard to the manifest spirit in which the treaty was originally framed. In all such controversies the states fight at a severe disadvantage.

The growth of such an attitude on the part of the Government cannot be too strongly deprecated. All treaties with native states, unless abrogated by mutual consent, should be binding on both parties, and there should be no attempt by departmental officials to evade them by indirect methods. To Ministers with a policy these treaties may seem of little moment, but to the states they are sacred. At any cost they should be upheld. The rounding off of a great scheme may seem urgently desirable, and the opposition of a state may seem frivolous; but a far greater principle is really at stake, and that is the honour of Great Britain. The one guiding policy when such issues arise is to keep faith with the native states at any sacrifice. The tendencies to

which I have referred are not to be specially associated with any particular Viceroyalty, and certainly not with that of Lord Curzon, more than with those who preceded or came after him. It may be noted as an omission, however, that in his many reviews of the mutual obligations of the Sovereign Power and the states, he did not lay sufficient stress upon that necessity for either observing written engagements or terminating them, which should have found emphatic mention in any examination of this complex question.

One great service was rendered by Lord Curzon to the princes and chiefs of India, greater, perhaps, than they themselves realise. He brought them out of comparative seclusion, and by encouraging closer intimacy with the Government, and with each other, produced among them a more vivid consciousness of the great part they have to play in the wider arena of Indian affairs. While he resisted the comfortable doctrine that it does not matter very much to the Paramount Power how the native states are administered, he was far more insistent in declaring that the chiefs could not afford to keep aloof from the larger destinies of India. In Sir William Lee-Warner's book on the native states there is a chapter entitled, "The Policy of Subordinate Isolation." The phrase is used to cover a particular series of historical events, but it is not inapplicable to the relations between the Government and the princes in quite recent times. Many of the Maharajahs approved of the tendency thus implied, and held that if they looked after their own states they were sufficiently occupied. They deliberately disclaimed interest in the politics of the Indian Empire. Lord Curzon, far more than any other Viceroy, broke down the tendency to isolation, brought the Maharajahs into more frequent intercourse with the heads of the British Administration, and made them feel that they were active partners in a great Imperial organisation. One step in this direction was the purchase of Hastings House, a

spacious Calcutta mansion in which the princes could be entertained as the guests of the State.

Despite his occasional admonitions, Lord Curzon was one of the best friends the princes of India ever had. He lost no opportunity of developing among them the knowledge that the Viceroy was not merely the representative of their Sovereign, but one to whom they could turn for counsel in difficulty, and help in time of need. He encouraged them to lay their troubles before him in the intimacy of private intercourse, and his unwearying solicitude for their personal welfare was deeply appreciated. To the same end, he visited over forty of the states, in some of which no Viceroy had ever before set foot. That he became the confidant of many of the Maharajahs, and made friendships among them which still endure, is within my own knowledge. No Governor-General has ever had more commanding influence among the princes and chiefs than Lord Curzon enjoyed in the closing years of his residence in India. They respected his great strength of character, but they prized his friendship still more.

An important feature of Lord Curzon's native state policy was his endeavour to associate the princes of India more closely and uniformly with the responsibilities of Imperial defence. Formerly some of the states maintained fairly large irregular armies, though the troops were deficient in equipment and training, and of small fighting value. In recent decades the native state armies have greatly diminished in numbers. At present they are collectively said to be about 93,000 strong, but all are armed with smooth-bore muskets, and the batteries have smooth-bore guns. During the Viceroyalty of Lord Dufferin, when war seemed imminent on the frontier, the princes placed their resources at the disposal of the Government. Out of this generous offer arose Lord Dufferin's scheme of Imperial Service troops, consisting of forces maintained by the princes, trained and armed like the Native Army, inspected by British officers,

and available for Imperial service "when placed at the disposal of the British Government by their rulers." Lord Dufferin, in announcing the scheme, said: "It is hoped that . . . while each force will remain a purely state force recruited in the territories of its chief and serving within them, the troops composing it will gradually be made so efficient as to enable the Imperial Government to use them as part of its available resources to meet any external danger." The conditions devised by Lord Dufferin have an important bearing on the present position.

The Imperial Service troops number about 18,000, and include cavalry 7100, artillery 421, sappers 570, infantry 9884, camel corps 665, and six transport corps and two signalling units. Many of the important native states maintain Imperial Service troops, but there are omissions, the most conspicuous of which is Baroda. They have done good service in warfare, and Lord Curzon sent detachments of them to China and Somaliland. Considering, however, that the native states represent one-third of the area and one-fifth of the population of British India, it cannot be said that the Imperial Service troops constitute an adequate contribution towards Imperial defence. An unforeseen difficulty is that Lord Dufferin's provisions are incompatible with modern military experience. Isolated units scattered over the face of the land can never be fully trained for the requirements of war. They need concentration in larger garrisons. On the other hand, the original estimate of the cost to the states has been considerably exceeded, because well-equipped troops are more expensive than they used to be.

Lord Curzon saw that the Imperial Service scheme was unequal, and therefore unsatisfactory, but he took no definite action until the Aga Khan brought the question into prominence by a speech in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1903. The Aga Khan suggested that the Imperial Service troops should be placed under the control

of the Commander-in-Chief, and supervised by British officers; that they should wear the uniforms of their state and carry the colours of their chiefs; that the irregular armed forces should be replaced by Imperial Service troops; and, though the suggestion was not very precise, that there should be "a system of recruiting according to population or territorial extent." Lord Curzon afterwards consulted the chiefs in pursuance of these suggestions. His letter was not made public, but its purport was that each state might contribute towards Imperial defence to the extent of a fixed proportion of its revenue. The contribution was to be in the shape of troops, and not cash; but the desirability of a better system of training, and of periods of peace service with the regular Army outside the borders of the state, was indicated.

I have always understood that while most of the responses were, in terms, favourable, and while many of the chiefs were willing to acknowledge the obligation of a more adequate and more equal contribution to Imperial defence, the replies gave evidence of uneasiness regarding the possible ultimate development of the principle of contributing a fixed proportion of revenue. A considerable number of chiefs, and those by no means of the least importance, were in reality frankly unfavourable to the scheme, which they regarded with real alarm. They held that it took no sufficient account of the diversity of the relations and treaty obligations subsisting between the States and the Paramount Power, and urged that it was subversive of the basis of the original scheme of Imperial Service troops.

The arguments of some of those who opposed the scheme, as placed before me at the time, were to this effect: "The essence of Lord Dufferin's scheme was that it should be voluntary. We were to give what we liked, and only if we chose to do so. Now you want us to give a fixed proportion of our revenue, but still you call it voluntary. In time another Viceroy will appear and say it ought to be compulsory. In

the end, therefore, our loyal desire to help the Government will be made the excuse for a tax for defence. A fixed proportion of revenue will operate unequally. A rich state could pay a tenth with ease, but to a poor state, heavily in debt, that tenth would be a grave matter. We do not like to send our troops out of our states except for war. We know it is better to train in large bodies, and that a turn of peace service on the frontier would do our troops good. But we like to see our troops in our own capitals, and feel that they are ours. Once they are taken away, shall we ever see them again? There will be another Commander-in-Chief, who will forget what Lord Kitchener has said, and we shall never see our troops any more. We shall hear a great deal about the requirements of the Army Staff, and the end of it all will be that our share in the Imperial Service movement will be the writing of an annual cheque in return for an annual compliment."

I think these views were held, in part at least, by more states than ventured to give expression to them. The scheme was still under consideration when Lord Curzon left, and it has not had any practical result. Yet it cannot be supposed that the question of the obligation of the native states to undertake a larger share of Imperial defence can be left where it is. It should be added that in the speech I have quoted, the Aga Khan distinctly predicated a reduction of the Native Army of British India, corresponding to the increase of Imperial Service troops on the suggested new basis; but I have never heard that this portion of his scheme was endorsed by the Government of India.

The Imperial Cadet Corps, constituted in 1901 by Lord Curzon, under the sanction of King Edward, had another purpose, which was more important for its political results than for its military value. The corps consists of cadets of princely and noble houses, and was formed to give young men of rank an opportunity of training in their hereditary profession of arms, and of obtaining commissions in the

Army. Its summer quarters were established at Dehra Dun, and in winter it is attached to a camp of exercise in the plains. Several of the younger ruling chiefs joined the corps, which at present numbers under twenty. The course of instruction lasts two years, and there is an additional period of one year for cadets desiring commissions in the Imperial Army. The corps has British officers. Some of the cadets have been appointed to the staffs of general officers, and others have received commissions in the Imperial Service troops. On ceremonial occasions they have furnished an extra bodyguard for the Viceroy, and their handsome uniforms of white and Star of India blue were conspicuous at the last Delhi Durbar. The corps has not in recent years received the attention it deserves, and it may be hoped that efforts will now be made to expand it. Lord Curzon opened the door for the admission of Indians of family to the higher ranks of the Army, and this door can never be closed.

Probably no Viceroy ever gave so much earnest attention to native state questions as Lord Curzon, but in no respect was his solicitude more marked than in regard to the education of the chiefs. For manifold reasons, the scions of princely families in India cannot be sent to the ordinary educational institutions of the country, and the admirable chiefs' colleges at Rajkote, Ajmere, and Lahore were established to supply their needs. They are not public schools on the English pattern, and yet in many respects they are meant to foster the public school spirit. While every care is taken to provide a suitable course of instruction, the formation of character is held to be of equal importance. Many of the present ruling chiefs of India were trained in these institutions. Lord Curzon, after inspecting all the colleges, came to the conclusion that they "had not won the entire confidence of the chiefs," and had not therefore "completely fulfilled the conception of their founders." He summoned a conference at Calcutta in January 1902, at which the

question of the future of the chiefs' colleges was considered in careful detail. In his opening address to the conference, he formulated publicly his proposals for reform.

He desired to make the training more practical, and therefore suggested considerable changes in the teaching staff and in the curriculum. He thought that the colleges were constituted, "not to prepare for examinations, but to prepare for life." He wished to preserve them frankly as seminaries for the aristocratic classes, but thought the training should be varied in accordance with the future prospects of each pupil, so that whether he was intended for an officer, a landowner, an administrator, or a ruler, he would receive the education his prospective career required. He wanted, above all, to invoke the help and sympathy of the chiefs in greater measure, to induce them to discard their attitude of suspicion, and to make them feel that the colleges would render their sons and relatives better and more useful men.

A scheme providing for many improvements was duly prepared, and in March 1904 another conference met at Ajmere, at which numerous details were settled. The most notable outcome of the revival of interest in the chiefs' colleges was a great increase in the number of pupils. The Ajmere College doubled its numbers within two years, though in that particular instance the growth was partly due to the advent of a new and popular Principal, Mr. C. W. Waddington. Several of the Maharajahs contributed handsomely to the cost of the scheme, and liberal aid was received from the Government. Feeder schools were established or resuscitated in several native states. Finally, the Daly College at Indore, which had dwindled to the position of a feeder school, was raised to the dignity of a Rajkumar College by the enthusiasm and generosity of the Central India Chiefs. One of the closing events of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty was the laying of the foundation stone of the new Daly Chiefs' College on November 4, 1905. He was bitterly disappointed when at the last moment illness prevented him from attend-

ing, for he had regarded the Daly College, and the ardour with which the chiefs had set themselves to create it afresh on a splendid scale, as the crowning justification of his zeal for the better education of the aristocracy of India. In his absence the speech he had intended to deliver, which contained his farewell to the princes of India, was read by Mr. S. M. Fraser.

Of the practical help he gave to the states in their administration there is no room to speak; but it may be mentioned that the loans to native states during the famine of 1899–1900 amounted to over £1,800,000, exclusive of guarantees given for loans obtained in the open market. Among the many outstanding disputes which he settled, none was more prominent than his solution of the Berar question. For forty years the relations between the Government of India and Hyderabad, the premier native state, had been affected by the British occupation of the province of Berar. More than a hundred years ago, the British agreed to maintain a subsidiary force for the protection of the Nizam of Hyderabad, in return for a fixed payment. The Nizam consented to employ the force, afterwards known as the Hyderabad Contingent, together with his own irregular army, in the cause of the British in time of war. It rendered valuable service under Wellington at the decisive battle of Assaye, when the power of the Mahrattas was broken. In later years the Hyderabad payments for the Contingent fell into arrear. After various temporary arrangements had been made, the province of Berar, in Hyderabad territory, was "taken in trust" by the British, at first in 1853, but finally under a treaty of 1860. The gross annual revenue of Berar was at that time estimated at £213,000 (in all calculations of currency throughout this book I have, for convenience, estimated the exchange value of the rupee at 1*s.* 4*d.*). The arrangement was that all surplus revenue, after paying the cost of the Contingent and of the civil administration of the province, should be handed over to the Nizam.

Berar became an important centre of cotton production, and its other crops grew more valuable, so that in due course it attained unexpected prosperity. In Lord Curzon's time its gross revenue had reached an annual total of £793,000. Only a modest proportion of this sum ever reached the Hyderabad Treasury in the shape of surplus. It was alleged by the Hyderabad Government, not without substantial reason, that the civil administration of Berar was unduly extravagant, and that, in particular, the sums spent on public works were excessive. The military arrangements were unsatisfactory to the British as well as distasteful to the Nizam. The Contingent had practically become part of the Imperial Army, and was no longer needed for the special defence of the State of Hyderabad; yet under the terms of the treaty it had to be maintained as a separate military unit, and could not be cantoned outside the Nizam's territories in time of peace. Its cost was greater than was justifiable, the limitations imposed upon its movements lessened its efficiency, and its military position was anomalous. Hyderabad was at the same time financially embarrassed, and the feeling that it did not receive its due share of the Berar revenues was a constant grievance.

The Berar question remained an open sore until in 1902, after preliminary negotiations, Lord Curzon went personally to Hyderabad, and in a private interview with the Nizam came to an agreement which closed it for ever. The rendition of the province had become impossible, and no one saw that more clearly than the Nizam himself. Over two million people had been under direct British control for nearly half a century, and had enjoyed the advantages of an administration which was far in advance of that of their neighbours. I have said that in native states the people prefer the rule of their own chiefs; but the converse is also true, as Lord Curzon pointed out at a meeting of the Royal Society of Arts in 1908. The inhabitants of Berar would have been dismayed at the prospect of reverting to Hyderabad rule.

An alternative expedient was propounded by the Viceroy, and accepted without reserve by the Nizam. The British Government leased Berar in perpetuity at an annual rent of £168,000. The Nizam's sovereignty over Berar was re-affirmed, and his flag was to be flown at Amraoti, the capital of the province, on his birthday during the lifetime of the late ruler. The Hyderabad Contingent was fully incorporated in the Imperial Army, and released from the necessity of remaining in the Hyderabad dominions. The Nizam at the same time agreed to effect large reductions in his excessive and unnecessary irregular army, which have since been carried out. The Hyderabad State was heavily in debt to the British Government, and part of the rent was to be devoted towards liquidating these liabilities, but at no distant date the Nizam will come into possession of an annual income from Berar far exceeding anything he had ever received before. During the preceding forty years the Berar "surplus" had only shown an annual average of £58,000.

The bargain was a very fair one, and did reasonable justice to both parties. It has been said that the Nizam was at a disadvantage in negotiating in privacy with so persuasive a diplomatist as Lord Curzon, invested as he was with all the prestige of his high office. The contention does injustice both to the ability of the Nizam and to the forbearance of the Viceroy. The late Nizam, who died in August 1911, was a shrewd and capable ruler, extremely well conversant with the affairs of his state. He was as anxious as the Government of India to terminate the unhappy difference which had so long estranged them. I believe he was thoroughly satisfied with the settlement, and Sir David Barr, who was Resident at the time, stated in 1908 that his Highness had found it "entirely satisfactory." There can be no better authority, for Sir David Barr not only had much to do with the Berar negotiations, but he was instrumental in placing the relations between Hyderabad and Simla on a far better footing, and he enjoyed the

confidence of the Nizam to an unusual degree. The point in the Berar Agreement which perhaps weighed most with the Nizam was that his prestige was enhanced. The British Government remained in Berar, but only as his lessees. He had the further satisfaction of witnessing a reduction in the number of British troops in his territories.

A further outcome of the Hyderabad interview was that, at Lord Curzon's request, Mr. Casson Walker, an able financial officer from the Punjab who had already arrived at the Nizam's capital, was entrusted with the task of rehabilitating the finances of the state. The resources of Hyderabad had been sadly depleted by famine expenditure, but still more by defective financial control. Mr. Casson Walker remained at his post for nine years, and only retired at the beginning of 1911. When he left, the whole financial administration had been reorganised, and such far-reaching economies had been effected that the cash reserves and securities of the state had been quadrupled. The result was achieved despite the fact that debt amounting to over £1,333,000 had been paid off, while the increased expenditure required by administrative reforms had been duly met. Hyderabad is now in a stronger financial position than it has ever been before, but there is still much room for internal development. The greatest needs of the state are roads and feeder railways. Mr. Casson Walker in his final report makes the remarkable statement that "there are not more than four or five roads in the interior of the Dominions which are passable all the year." Owing to the lack of roads, and still more of bridges and culverts, the peasantry cannot market their spare produce in time of plenty, while when scarcity prevails, the absence of transport facilities leaves them "at the mercy of the local money-lender, who uses to the full his opportunities of raising prices against the ryot." These disclosures may be commended to the attention of advocates of the policy of encouraging conformity to the traditions of native states.

The traditional road of Hyderabad comes to a full-stop when it meets a stream or a gully.

The neighbouring state of Indore was under a cloud before Lord Curzon became Viceroy. The Maharajah Holkar had for many years been prone to acts of eccentricity, which had developed into serious injustice towards some among his subjects, and ultimately his whole government fell into confusion. The real cause of all the trouble was mental excitability, but it was plain that he was unfitted for the control of an important and populous state. In January 1903 he was permitted to abdicate, and his youthful son was installed in his stead, under the guidance of a Council of Regency. It may allay rumours still occasionally heard if I state definitely that the Maharajah abdicated by his own desire, although the desire was one which he was perhaps afterwards disposed to regret. A touching feature of the case was that he decided to appear for the last time as a ruler at the Delhi Durbar, where I met him, a genial man of fine presence and much distinction. Few people who saw him placidly taking snapshots in the Durbar arena on that New Year's morning had any idea that he was about to strip himself of his princely powers. One who watched him a few days later in open Durbar gravely salute his little son as his successor and prince, told me that in the moment of his abdication Holkar comported himself with such fine dignity that he won back in esteem much that he had lost. Such scenes are sometimes witnessed on the stage, but seldom in real life. He was happier in retirement, and lived for some years afterwards.

The restoration of powers to the Maharajah of Kashmir in 1905 was one of the last public acts performed by Lord Curzon in India, and the prince was so moved by the kindness he experienced at the hands of the Viceroy on that occasion that he travelled a thousand miles to take leave of him on the quay. In 1889 the powers of the Maharajah had been withdrawn from him at his own request, and

placed in the hands of a council which included his brothers. Lord Curzon held a special Durbar at Jammu for the restoration ceremony, and it was noted that no such ceremony had been held in India before. In the course of his speech the Viceroy took occasion to rebut the rumours that the Vale of Kashmir was about to be annexed by the Government of India, or that special conditions permitting Europeans to acquire property in the state had been imposed. By reason of its temperate climate and its natural beauty, Kashmir has come to be regarded as a Naboth's vineyard by some Englishmen. Within its borders a white race could rear children, and thus, it is argued, the problem of holding India could be greatly simplified. Lord Curzon's speech at Jammu finally disposed of these covetous tendencies.

The circular letter of 1900, requiring princes and chiefs to apply for leave to travel abroad, needs only passing mention. It obtained a publicity which, I believe, was never intended, and was the object of a good deal of criticism arising partly from lack of knowledge of the facts, and partly from the indiscreetly literal manner in which the letter was interpreted by some political officers. It was not addressed to any particular rulers, but was circulated to all. I have already said I think circular letters to native states are frequently unwise; and in this instance political officers, fearful of responsibility, were not content with communicating the spirit of the order, as was undoubtedly meant. But the purpose of the letter itself was entirely seemly. While some princes never leave India, and others rarely cross the borders of their states, a few were in the habit of departing on long foreign tours at frequent intervals. Occasionally these tours were made the occasion for reckless extravagance in expenditure, and in such cases the ultimate sufferers were the ruler's own subjects, who had to pay. The Government of India have never discouraged the natural desire of the rulers of native states to see the world, but they held that foreign journeys should be undertaken with some regard to

the resources of a state, and that a ruler should not be so much abroad as to neglect the administration of his own territories. The insistence upon obtaining sanction was meant to provide some check upon princely wanderings. No new principle was involved, and the circular letter had a good effect, though the intentions which inspired it have been somewhat in abeyance in more recent years.

Lord Curzon was not unmindful of the fact that, notwithstanding all his efforts to associate the princes and chiefs more closely with the Imperial affairs of India, his purpose would not be fully achieved unless some machinery was provided for bringing them collectively and periodically into touch and co-operation with the Government. Some such design was in the mind of Lord Lytton, when before the Delhi Durbar of 1877 he proposed the formation of an Indian Privy Council, for which sanction was refused by the home authorities. Lord Curzon's plan was never made public; but it was understood that it provided for the constitution of a selected body of princes, who were to deal only with certain specified matters in which they were concerned. It was essentially limited and tentative, though it contained the germ of far greater things. It seems to have become merged in Lord Minto's much larger scheme for an Imperial Advisory Council for consultative purposes, which was to include both ruling princes and territorial magnates drawn from British India. Lord Minto's scheme was submitted to the Secretary of State in 1907, but it got no further.

One of the difficulties which retard the realisation of these projects is the hesitation of the princes and chiefs themselves. Not only their claims to precedence, but their dislike of innovations, and their fears lest in some unforeseen way their powers may be curtailed, block the way. Yet some solution must be found, for the development of India into a great Empire with world-wide interests, in which its most prominent men have

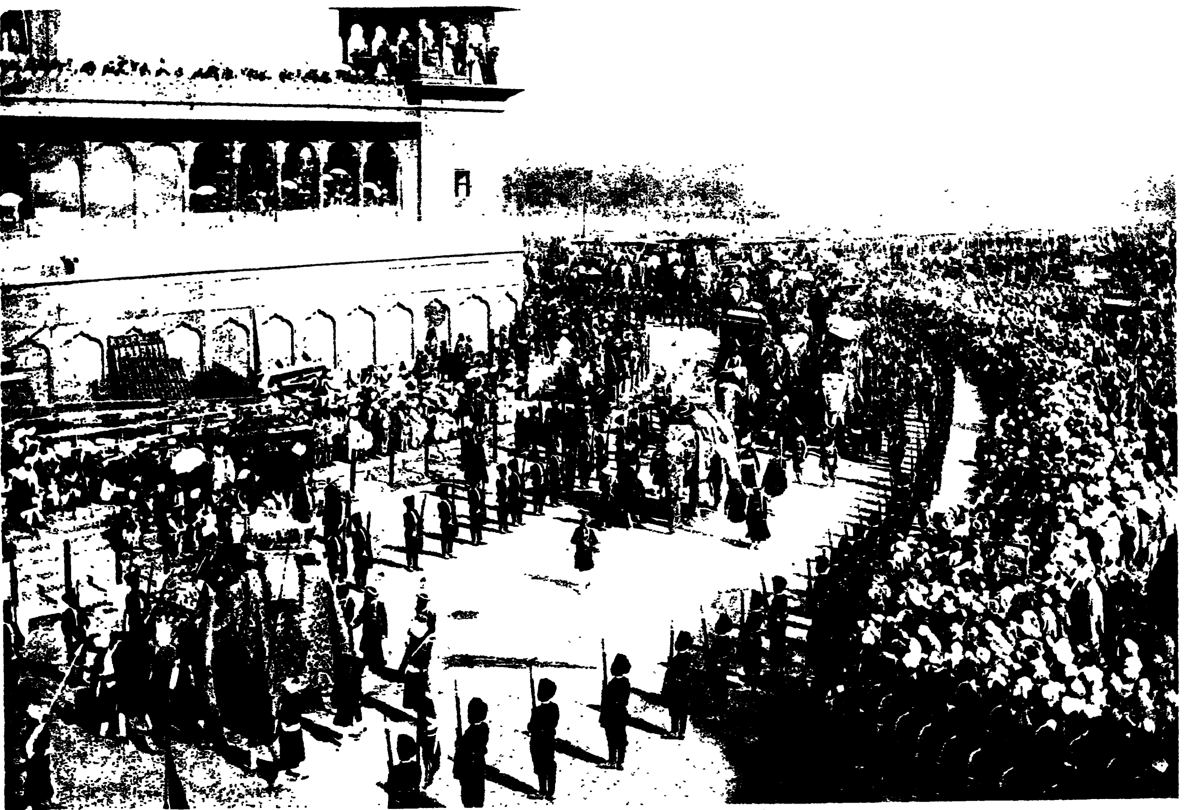
no practical voice, is not a position which can for ever continue. Nor can Great Britain from time to time enlarge the liberties of the peoples of British India without regard to the attitude of the native states. Every fresh concession which gives the non-official representatives of British India a larger share in deciding great Imperial questions, which affect the native states in equal measure, must in the end cause resentment. Able and ambitious Maharajahs will not for ever be content to see their destinies pass more largely into the control of the men who sit upon the Imperial Council, while they themselves are excluded. A serious defect of Lord Morley's policy while he was Secretary of State for India was that in all he said and did, he spoke and acted as though the native states did not exist. They seemed beyond the purview of his thought. His attitude resembled that taken up by the leaders of the Indian National Congress. When I asked Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee what he proposed to do with India's princes when he had parliaments in every province and a central Assembly on the banks of the Hooghly, he replied placidly: "They must remain outside." The disciples of the Congress leave the native states severely alone; yet there are 71,000,000 people in India who are not under British administrative control.

I do not foresee the day when the great Maharajahs will sit supine within their palaces while the fate of India passes into the hands of lawyers and schoolmasters, even though the new legislators have a Viceroy and a phalanx of British officials at their back; nor do I discern the time when they will relinquish their ancient powers and prerogatives, and entrusting their fortunes to representative assemblies on the Western model, permit themselves to sink to the level of superior *zemindars*. The "Assemblies" already convoked in one or two states are mere shams, and were never intended to be otherwise. In all the reforms we institute, we should keep carefully in mind their probable effect upon the

native states; and it should never be forgotten that whatever our ultimate purpose in India may be, we shall only be successful so long as we keep the native states as a living and integral part of the structure of the Empire.

In a chapter which deals with the princes of India, the great Coronation Assemblage at Delhi in December and January 1902-3 may best find a place; but as the last Delhi Durbar had many chroniclers, and as I have already described it at great length in my book, "At Delhi," I shall not enter into many details. As a pageant the Durbar was without precedent in the history of Asia, and probably its magnificence will never again be equalled. The organisers of the great Durbar about to be held by the King-Emperor at Delhi are not attempting to rival the 1903 gathering. The coming Durbar may excel the last assemblage in point of numbers, though that is now a matter of doubt; but it can hardly be invested with the same dramatic picturesqueness. It will derive its distinctive character from the actual presence of the King-Emperor and the Queen-Empress, and in that respect will therefore have an incomparable significance. For the first time in history a British Emperor will set foot upon the soil of India to receive the homage of princes and peoples. The great but inevitable defect of the last Durbar was the enforced absence of the Sovereign. It was said at the time of King Edward's death that if his health had permitted, he would have come to Delhi in person. The statement was perfectly true. For a brief space the project was seriously considered, but the difficulties of his Majesty's prolonged absence from England were at that time held to be insuperable.

The reason why the 1903 Durbar was so unique was that it really marked the end of an era, though designed to inaugurate the beginning of a new one. For the last time mediæval India was revealed in its old barbaric splendour. For sheer spectacular magnificence no sight I have ever seen can be compared with the elephant procession at the



(The Viceroy & Lady Curzon) (Duke & Duchess of Connaught)

The State Entry into Delhi. Dec. 29th 1902.

State Entry. Pictures convey no adequate conception of that marvellous moment when the Viceroy, on a gigantic elephant, with all the greatest princes of India in his train, approached the Jumma Musjid and entered Delhi slowly, impressively, the central figure in a vision so resplendent that at first the awestruck crowds forgot to cheer. It was a scene that made one catch one's breath in wonder; for those who saw it nothing will ever dim the memory of the solemn irresistible march of the elephants, the swaying howdahs of burnished gold and silver, the proud Maharajahs seated on high, the clanging bells and the strains of martial music, the silent, motionless enveloping troops, the uncountable crowds in radiant vestments, and the majestic setting, the mighty cathedral mosque and the vast red fort, and the umbrageous park between. The Durbar can be repeated again, but not that unforgettable spectacle.

Another event which will not be seen again was the review of the retinues of the chiefs. It was not entirely spontaneous, for many of the costumes had been prepared for the occasion, but it was the final glowing outburst of an India that has passed away for ever. On the plain outside the huge amphitheatre one met whole squadrons of horsemen in chain armour, mail-clad warriors on camels, even elephants in coats of mail, tattered Arab cavalry, Shans from Burma in green and mauve velvet, soldiers from the desert in huge quilted coats of slate-blue, monks from far Ladak in grinning dragon masks, fighting men on stilts for attacking war elephants, a wondrous medley of the mediæval soldiery of the East. The State Ball, held in the Dewan-i-Am, or Hall of Public Audience, in the Fort, was another brilliant gathering, and there was a State Investiture, at which the recipients of honours in the two great Indian Orders had their insignia bestowed upon them by the Viceroy. At the great review which closed the Assemblage Lord Curzon reviewed 40,000 troops, the flower of the Army of India, under the command of Lord Kitchener.

At the Durbar itself, which was attended by over a hundred rulers of separate states, the King-Emperor's proclamation commanding the Viceroy to hold the Durbar was read by a mounted herald, who rode into the arena attended by trumpeters. Lord Curzon read a gracious message from His Majesty, and afterwards announced that the Government had remitted three years' interest on famine loans to native states. The absence of any boon to the people, which is associated in the Oriental mind with such occasions, caused much disappointment; but the financial conditions of the moment were not propitious. Though I have dwelt upon the picturesque side of the Durbar, it is a mistake to suppose that it was a mere pageant. Lord Curzon said afterwards, in his Budget speech in 1903, that "it was a landmark in the history of the people, and a chapter in the ritual of the State." It was meant "to remind all the princes and peoples of the Asiatic Empire of the British Crown that they had passed under the dominion of a new and single sovereign." The Durbar had to suffer some amount of snarling criticism, both before and afterwards, but there was never, in the minds of those who witnessed it, any doubt about its triumphant success. It created a new sense of unity among the Indian peoples, awoke for the first time a consciousness of their fellowship in a world-wide Empire, and strengthened their affection for the King and the Royal Family. The presence of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, who have spent twelve years in India, and are greatly beloved there, contributed greatly to the last-named result.

Much misconception still prevails about the cost of the 1903 Durbar. Lord Curzon announced at the outset that "a great State ceremonial would never have been conducted in India on more economical lines." The claim was more than justified, for unexpected savings were effected in the disposal of material after the gathering. In the Budget Debate for 1903 it was stated that the net charge against

Imperial revenues for the entire Durbar worked out at £84,000, while the expenditure of the Provincial Governments was £99,000, but the total cost was £200,000. These sums do not include the outlay by the native states, which are generally lavish on such occasions. I can only speak of two or three states about which I chanced to make personal inquiries, and it appeared to me that in each instance the state had spent a moderate sum in proportion to its annual revenue. For example, I found that more than one prominent state had expended a sum equivalent to about three per cent. of its annual revenue; but in Indian gossip, and in the columns of certain newspapers in England, these charges were greatly inflated by the exercise of lively imagination.

The public never knew the enormous amount of labour Lord Curzon devoted to the Durbar. It came in the midst of absorbing preoccupations; it was only an incident of his Viceroyalty; but the work he did for it would have served some men for a lifetime. The task of preparation on the spot occupied a considerable staff for a whole year. Four times Lord Curzon visited Delhi to inspect, revise, and improve the arrangements. He planned every detail, and saw every detail executed. From first to last, the whole gathering was his own conception, and the driving force which made him a human dynamo during his sojourn in India alone rendered the scheme possible of execution. Everybody predicted failure, and yet there was never the slightest semblance of a breakdown. The secret of the work which Lord Curzon accomplished in India was that from early manhood he had trained himself to be absolutely methodical in all he undertook. No Viceroy, save Dalhousie, ever wrote so much with his own hand. His papers were a miracle of orderliness. Some one has said that his capacity for work is almost inhuman, and certainly to unmethodical men he seemed to toil with the unswerving certitude of a machine; but it was only by this rigid persistence that he

left behind him such an astonishing record of labours completed. In no undertaking did his talent for organisation shine so brilliantly as in the Delhi Durbar. I recall the remark of a celebrated soldier, who roused himself from a reverie one evening in camp, and said he had been wondering what the world would have seen if the Viceroy had been in the Army, and had brought the same qualities to bear on the conduct of a great campaign.

The Durbar was held to proclaim the accession of a new Sovereign, but it also fell to Lord Curzon's lot to lead a movement for commemorating the memory of the illustrious dead. From the time of his arrival he had dreamed of the creation of a building which should contain "a standing record of our wonderful history, a visible monument of Indian glories, and an illustration, more eloquent than any spoken address or printed page, of the lessons of public patriotism and civic duty." He had worked out the details of the proposal, and even prepared tentative designs of the building, when the lamented death of Queen Victoria aroused throughout India a desire for an Imperial Memorial worthy of the late Queen-Empress. Lord Curzon submitted his scheme, first at a meeting in the Calcutta Town Hall on February 6, 1901, and afterwards at a meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The Victoria Hall, he explained, was to be an Historical Museum, a National Gallery, and it was essential that "the art, the science, the literature, the history, the men, the events which are therein commemorated must be those of India, and of Great Britain in India, alone." I will not pause to discuss the criticism which the scheme encountered, sometimes useful and valuable, occasionally carping and querulous. Disputes about national memorials are not unknown in England, and there is some quality in the climate of India which seems to develop the habit of mordant criticism. Such opposition as was originally offered to the Victoria Memorial Hall failed, in my belief, because nobody was able to suggest a better alternative. At any

rate, it gradually died away. The princes and chiefs supported the scheme with great generosity from the outset. Their subscriptions were at first limited to a maximum of £6666 each, though the maximum was afterwards raised, in response to a desire expressed by wealthy princes, to £16,600. It ought not to be necessary to say that all subscriptions were entirely spontaneous, and that no pressure was brought; and the unworthy allegation to the contrary, openly made at the time, is only mentioned here for the purpose of explicit denial. The Maharajah of Gwalior actually offered the splendid donation of £66,000 towards the fund, while the Maharajah of Kashmir wanted to contribute £100,000.

The Victoria Memorial Hall scheme survived all vicissitudes, thanks largely to the energetic support it received from the Viceroy, and the building is now under construction on the Calcutta *maidan.* King George laid the foundation stone during his Indian tour as Prince of Wales. The building was designed by Sir William Emerson, and is to be in the Italian Renaissance style, though there will be "a suggestion of Orientalism in the arrangement of the domes and minor details." The whole structure will be faced with white marble, hewed from the Makrana quarries in Rajputana; and when complete it should be the architectural glory of Calcutta. The occasional suggestions that it should be perverted to other uses have fortunately never received any countenance from the Government of India. Lord Curzon sufficiently answered the utilitarian proposals sometimes placed before him when he said: "Do not let us use Queen Victoria's name to absolve us from our legitimate responsibilities." Some delay has been caused by unexpected difficulties in preparing the foundations, but in any case it would have taken many years to complete such a magnificent enterprise.

It has been said already that Lord Curzon visited forty native states during his Viceroyalty, but some further notes of his indefatigable travels may be of interest, and they may

fittingly conclude a chapter which has already covered a rather wide field. The saga of his wanderings in the Indian Empire may perhaps be told in greater detail by other pens; but it will be worth the telling, for he always wandered with a definite purpose. The business of a Viceroy of India should be, among other things, to travel as much as possible in the countries he administers, and not merely to oscillate between Simla and Calcutta. Lord Curzon lost no opportunity of examining in person the condition of every province; and when there were decisions to be made, he tried whenever possible to investigate the questions on the spot. He was no arm-chair Viceroy.

Three months after his arrival he went to Lahore, and visited the Punjab Canal Colonies, on his way from Calcutta to Simla. In the autumn of 1899 he started from Simla on his first prolonged tour, and, after a halt at Delhi, inspected the famine relief works at Hissar and elsewhere. His appearance on horseback in the relief camps—for in his earlier years in India he was wont to ride a good deal when on tour—caused some astonishment, especially as he moved about almost unattended whenever engaged upon famine inspection. Thence he went to Ajmere, and to the province of Kathiawar, where there was much scarcity. Lord Curzon is the only Viceroy who has visited Kathiawar. Afterwards he proceeded to Bombay and Poona, to visit the plague hospitals and to inquire into the plague preventive measures. At Bombay he witnessed the inauguration of the scheme for rebuilding the slums of the city, prepared under the auspices of Lord Sandhurst. His subsequent itinerary included Ahmednagar, Nagpur, Jabalpur, Bhopal, Gwalior, Agra, Cawnpore, Lucknow, and Benares.

Early in March 1900, Lord Curzon went on a short tour in Assam, which had never before been visited by a Viceroy, except a brief visit paid by Lord Northbrook to the Surma Valley. He mingled with the planters, saw the tea plantations, discussed the Assam labour question, and ascended the

Brahmaputra River. At the end of March he made a tour of the North-West Frontier, partly in view of the scheme for the new province, which was then maturing. After a pause at Amritsar, where he saw the shrine of the Sikhs, he crossed into Baluchistan and held a Durbar for the chiefs of the province at Quetta; went to the confines of Afghanistan at Chaman; and returned through the Derajat and the valley of the Indus, reaching Simla at the end of April. The gravity of the famine in Western India induced Lord Curzon to undertake a special tour in Gujerat in August, although the weather was very unfavourable for travelling. His visit, in conjunction with the earlier one, brought about important modifications in famine policy, to which I shall again refer.

His autumn tour in 1900 was through Sind and Western and Southern India. His first important halt was at the flourishing port of Karachi. Afterwards he voyaged by sea, paying visits to the Rao of Cutch in his remote capital of Bhuj; to the tiny Portuguese colony of Diu; to the ancient city of Somnath-Patan, in Kathiawar, and to Junagadh and Rajkote; to Surat, Bombay, Bijapur, and the ruined Hindu city of Vijayanagar; to the vestiges of Portuguese dominion at Goa; to Cochin and Quilon on the Malabar coast, and the old-world state of Travancore; and finally to Mysore and the chief cities of the Madras Presidency. One interesting feature of this journey was Lord Curzon's visit to the Kolar goldfields.

On his way to Simla, in the spring of 1901, he inspected the famous Mahomedan educational institution at Aligarh, and also called at Delhi. In November 1901, he started on an adventurous journey, far from the railway, and for a little time even from the telegraph, through the wild hilly country of Silchar and Manipur, across into Upper Burma, and thence to Mandalay. It was a journey which would have tried a traveller inured to incessant hardship, but those who accompanied him said that, although he started weary from long days and nights at his desk at Simla, he showed no sign

of fatigue. The rough life seemed to act as a restorative. At Lashio he held a Durbar for the chiefs of the Northern Shan States, and various visits in Lower Burma concluded with his arrival at Rangoon.

In the year 1902 Lord Curzon's travels were even more frequent. At the end of February he made a tour of Northern Bengal, including Darjeeling. When the Calcutta season closed he made a special pilgrimage to Hyderabad to settle the Berar question, and afterwards he went to Peshawar to see the officials of the new province, to receive the frontier chiefs in Durbar, and to inspect the Khyber. In August he went to Mysore to invest the young Maharajah with ruling powers, and he took the opportunity of conferring with the Madras Government at Ootacamund. In the autumn he went for a prolonged series of visits in the Rajputana States, and after the Durbar he stopped at Gaya, Arrah, Patna, and elsewhere on his way to Calcutta.

The principal places visited during the spring tour of 1903 were Allahabad, Rewah, and Kasauli; and in the autumn visits to the important native states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Bahawalpur, and Ulwar, formed the prelude to the voyage to the Persian Gulf which has been described in an earlier chapter.

The tour undertaken by the Viceroy in February 1904 was somewhat momentous, because he went to Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh to explain and defend the proposed partition of Bengal, which was then under consideration. He stayed at Simla afterwards, before sailing for England. On his return to renew his Viceroyalty he proceeded straight to Calcutta, but hurried to Bombay in March 1905 to meet Lady Curzon. His spring tour included Pusa, Rampur, and Lucknow; he went to Jammu in October to restore the powers of the Maharajah of Kashmir, and afterwards to Lahore; he came to Bombay early in November to welcome the Prince and Princess of Wales; and the closing days of

his Viceroyalty were spent in quietude at Agra, which he loved more than any other spot in India.

If my recital of these Odyssean wanderings is little more than a very incomplete geographical list, my plea must be that it has been necessary to resist temptation. To yield would be to unfold an interminable panorama of the cities of the present and the relics of the historic past, and to describe every phase of Indian life, from the tribal customs of the wild people of the Chin Hills, to the patient husbandry of the peasants of Madras. Lord Curzon saw India as no other Viceroy has ever seen it; his thirst for knowledge of the land under his control was insatiable; but always his heart turned to the cities of Delhi and Agra, and it was in a final contemplation of the glorious vision of the Taj, which his own reverent care had done so much to preserve and enhance, that he sought relief from the poignant emotions with which his last days in India were charged. Nothing in India appealed to him so much as these majestic cities of the Moguls; he visited each seven times, he renewed the ancient splendour of the one, and in the other he found solace at the end.

VII

THE OVERHAULING OF MACHINERY

When Lord Curzon was presented with the freedom of the City of London on July 20, 1904, he reminded the Lord Mayor and Corporation that "epochs arise in the history of every country when the administrative machinery requires to be taken to pieces and overhauled, and readjusted to the altered necessities or the growing demands of the hour." He went on to claim, with justice, that during his first five years in India he had been engaged upon "a work of reform and reconstruction." In his sixth Budget speech, three months earlier, he had said, "in no spirit of pride, but as a statement of fact, that reform had been carried through every branch and department of the administration, that abuses had been swept away, anomalies remedied, the pace quickened, and standards raised." He admitted that the policy had not always been popular, and the admission was perhaps necessary. On another occasion Lord Curzon had spoken of his determination to place every branch of Indian policy and administration "upon the anvil, to test its efficiency and durability, and, if possible, do something for its improvement"; and though the wielder of the hammer in such a process might be "whole-hearted and sincere," as the Viceroy claimed to be, the drivers of the machines which were being fashioned afresh were doubtless not always readily amenable to the operation. Nevertheless, it was surprising to note how little resistance was shown to a widespread series of administrative reforms, and how

general was the testimony to their efficacy when they were concluded.

In a sense, the greater part of this record is a story of the overhauling of machinery. I have already described the reorganisation of frontier administration, the consolidation of British influence in Persia and the Gulf, the reforms in agrarian policy, the reconstruction of the educational system, and the bringing of the native states into closer association with the larger aims of the Empire. In later chapters I shall deal with the preparation of a new irrigation programme, the formulation of a new policy towards commerce and industry, financial reforms, the rescue of Eastern Bengal after many decades of neglect, and the development of the Indian military system. The improvement of the defences of India formed a necessary and integral part of the design, and though much of the work was done by others, Lord Curzon not only made its fulfilment possible by the labours of his first four years, but himself chose the instrument who brought it to completion. Meanwhile certain features of his Viceroyalty, which have special relation to the administrative services, can best be brought together here; and it will be convenient to deal at the same time with the important changes which were gradually introduced as a result of the Police Commission.

The condition of the Indian police forms a constant theme for vituperation among a limited number of Englishmen. There are four things, however, which they omit to tell the public at home. They never explain that the acts of cruelty or oppression which they recount with so much zeal are invariably committed by Indians upon Indians. Though they expound, in Parliament and in the Press, the occasional scandals which arise, they never disclose the large number of cases in which police offences are severely punished by the British courts. They never make the slightest attempt to acknowledge the strenuous efforts of the Government of India, extending over a long series of years, to

purify the police force. Above all, while condemning existing conditions, they never refer to the far greater abuses of police authority which were permitted under native rule.

An accurate judgment upon many of the problems of India can only be formed after comparison with the circumstances of the past. When an impassioned critic condemns this or that phase of British rule he should always be asked: "What was done in this respect before the British arrived?" The answer, if it is a fair one, will often be found illuminating, and should give the measure of the progress accomplished. Upon no question is comparison more necessary than in the case of the police. The British, on their advent into the older provinces of India, found a few corrupt functionaries in the towns; while in the country districts, in addition to a system of village watchmen, the *zemindars*, or holders of large estates, were held responsible for the maintenance of order and the suppression of crime.

"Instead of protecting the inhabitants of their estates, these landowners had grossly abused the authority entrusted to them for that purpose. They extorted and amassed wealth, which was dissipated in a jealous rivalry of magnificent pageantry. The weapons which were intended for the enemies only of the state were turned against the state itself, and against each other, and were used for plans of personal aggrandisement, mutual revenge, or public plunder. It was sometimes with difficulty that the regular or standing Army of the state could restrain the insolence or subdue the insubordination of these intestine rebels and robbers."

It cannot be said that in their early experiments the British effected much improvement. Their first reforms were actually attended by a marked increase of crime; and even in later years, when it was thought some progress had been made, the revelations of the Madras Torture Commission of 1855 showed that the trouble was still deep.

The records of the last half-century contain evidence of repeated attempts to improve the efficiency, and to restrain the malpractices, of the police. Lord Lansdowne gave the question much anxious attention, and introduced many valuable improvements. He was hampered, however, in this and in other projects by lack of funds.

Lord Curzon was so vividly aware of the need for further reform of the police that he included the subject in his first list of twelve questions. In 1902, with the approval of the Secretary of State, he appointed a Commission, with Sir Andrew Fraser as President, and Mr. (afterwards Sir Harold) Stuart as Secretary, to inquire into the police administration of every province. Three provinces had already submitted extensive proposals for the reorganisation of their police, and the object of the Commission was to devise a homogeneous plan of reform. The Commission sat for seven and a half months, and visited every province of British India except Baluchistan. It was the last of the great Commissions appointed during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty.

Its report was signed on May 30, 1903, and contained such a severe indictment of the Indian police system that some surprise was afterwards expressed at the courage of the Government in permitting its tardy publication. The tone of its conclusions is sufficiently disclosed in the following extracts:

"There can be no doubt that the police force throughout the country is in a most unsatisfactory condition, that abuses are common everywhere, that this involves great injury to the people and discredit to the Government, and that radical reforms are urgently necessary. These reforms will cost much, because the department has hitherto been starved; but they must be effected. . . .

"The police force is far from efficient; it is defective in training and organisation; it is inadequately supervised; it is generally regarded as corrupt and oppressive; and it has

utterly failed to secure the confidence and cordial co-operation of the people. . . .

"The attitude of the people towards the police, and of public opinion in regard to unrighteousness and corruption, have to be raised."

The Government of India, in a covering resolution, while acknowledging the admirable character of the report, expressed the opinion that it was a picture which had been formed "by picking out and massing together all the separate blots which at various times disfigure police work in India." The Commission, they thought, had perhaps hardly made sufficient allowance for the tendency of Indian witnesses to exaggerate; and they very properly suggested that the existing state of affairs, unsatisfactory as it might be, represented an immense advance on that described in the report of the Madras Commission in 1855. Lord Curzon, however, declared two years afterwards that "no more fearless or useful report had ever been placed before the Government of India." He had from the outset favoured unedited publication, and the opposition which delayed the appearance of the document was understood to have come from England. A further cause of delay was the necessity for prolonged reference to the provincial Governments upon points of detail.

I should be inclined to say that, while there were probably few specific statements in the report which could be challenged, it laid too little stress on the better qualities of the police force, and therefore hardly did it justice. In considering the shortcomings of the Indian police, we may well recall the condition of the police arrangements in England before the reforms of Sir Robert Peel. Recently Sir Edmund Cox, a well-known Indian police officer, has advanced three interesting reasons in support of his contention that the police have the confidence of the people. If it is ever proposed, he says, to abolish any police post, there is

at once a flood of petitions for its retention; very often a similar flood is produced by a proposal to remove a head constable or constable; and in minor cases, including small thefts, people will often walk miles to lay a complaint before the regular police sooner than inform the village police. These reasons deserve consideration, though they do not seem to me very convincing; and I should be surprised to learn that they apply to Bengal. The Police Commission was in many respects the best Commission appointed by Lord Curzon. It performed its task thoroughly, and made many admirable recommendations, some of which are still being worked out; and yet several of the features of its report were curiously unpractical. Certain of its suggestions for the better policing of the great cities were rightly resisted, and in Bombay the opposition was successful; while the proposal that prospective police officers should spend two years at an English University, which was promptly rejected by the Government of India, was astonishing.

The most important recommendation of the Commission was that the pay of all ranks of the police should be increased, and therein was touched the mainspring of police reform in India. Many of the evils which still exist are traceable to the practice of investing with official authority uneducated peasants, who are expected to subsist on the merest pittance. How can a solitary English police officer, possibly in charge of a huge district containing a million inhabitants, prevent corruption and oppression by his poorly paid subordinates, in a country which regards such practices as the natural prerogative of Government underlings? The marvel is, not that abuses exist, but rather that they are not more frequent. Yet the cost of placing the pay of the police upon a really adequate basis, in an Empire with the area and population of India, must always be to a great extent prohibitive. Among the host of other recommendations, proposals to increase the strength of the force in all provinces, to institute a provincial police service manned by natives of India (to

fill the higher native posts), to establish training schools for probationers of all grades, and to develop the old village police, may be noted. The Commission estimated the cost of its proposals at an additional million pounds a year, and it is not surprising that the Government of India gasped in some dismay at the figures.

Nevertheless, Lord Curzon strenuously set to work upon such of the proposals as could be carried out without delay. The report, after being held back for nearly two years, was issued to the public on March 21, 1905. The Budget of 1905–6 allotted £330,000 to the provincial Governments as a first grant in aid of police reforms. It was at once decided gradually to increase the total strength of the force from 149,000 to 168,000 men, and this has since been more than completed, for there are now 177,758 officers and men. The strengthening of the armed reserves was hurried forward, because their utilisation in preserving internal peace in the event of external war formed an important feature of Lord Kitchener's scheme of Indian defence. One very valuable reform was the creation of a Department of Criminal Intelligence, of which Sir Harold Stuart was the first Director. The Department is charged with the investigation of special forms of crime, including political offences. Its duties are not an innovation, but they had previously been somewhat inadequately discharged by the obsolete Thagi and Dakaiti Department. The changes proposed by the Police Commission are still incomplete, and the suggested development of the village police has not yet been accomplished; but the Commission itself recognised that it would take "a generation of official life" to carry out a policy based upon the principles it formulated. Lord Curzon settled the policy, and secured the adherence of the Secretary of State and the provincial Governments. He gave the new scheme a vigorous start, and his successors have loyally followed the lines he laid down. A fair test of the extent of the improvements already effected is provided by the records

of expenditure. When Lord Curzon went to India, the total annual expenditure upon the police was £2,117,000; by 1908–9 it had reached £3,212,189, and it is still increasing. Further progress in police administration does not depend upon the efforts of the Government alone; it depends far more upon the development in India of that consciousness of the duties of citizenship, which in Western countries leads the public to give the police their moral, and on occasion their practical support.

In my belief, the Indian police do not receive fair treatment. They will never be regenerated by the bullying to which they are now subjected from every quarter. No body of men was ever made efficient by incessant discouragement. Their defects partly arise from the indifferent quality of the administration of criminal justice. If the police are often bad, the courts of high and low degree are frequently of dubious competency. Inefficient courts tend to make a poor police. No reflection is intended upon the eminent men who in the past have found well-deserved fame in the Indian judicial service. The Indian courts to-day contain many judges of whose qualifications and attainments any country might well be proud. I speak solely of the general average of efficiency. The district courts of India are chiefly manned by civil servants; in the High Courts there is a statutory proportion of English or Indian barristers (a number of civilian judges are also barristers). Common failings among civilian judges are laxity in the observance of the laws of evidence, and a tendency to allow undue latitude to the Bar. The extraordinary licence permitted to the Bar has become a feature of most Indian courts in recent years. Apart from the Chief Justices and a few other notable exceptions, the discipline maintained in the courts is generally open to criticism. On the other hand, English barrister judges are sometimes far too disposed to measure everything they hear by English standards, and they have little opportunity of gaining knowledge of the country and

the people, unless they have first practised for a long time at the Indian Bar. The need for a Commission to inquire into the whole system of the administration of criminal justice in India—not only in the courts, but perhaps still more in the methods of prosecution adopted by the Government—is scarcely less urgent than the need which existed with regard to the police in 1902. I am not sure that such an inquiry should be confined to the criminal side of the courts. In the case of the chartered High Courts, the whole system probably requires placing "upon the anvil." The redeeming feature of the situation is the exalted standards of integrity held by English and Indian judges alike.

Lord Curzon carried out several important judicial reforms, though he left untouched the great issue of the inadequacy of the courts and their methods. He recognised that judicial service was unpopular among Indian civilians owing to its limited opportunities, and sought to improve the quality of the judiciary by increasing the pay and the pension benefits of High Court judges. He raised the strength of the Calcutta High Court, added judges in several of the provincial tribunals, and provided a Chief Court for Lower Burma. The position of the subordinate judiciary was improved in most provinces. In many respects the whole judicial establishment throughout India was reorganised. An enormous task, originally begun by Sir Henry Prinsep, was the revision of the great Indian Code of Civil Procedure, which was almost entirely done during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. It consolidated and amended many separate enactments, and was finally passed in 1908.

It is almost impossible to specify in detail the many reforms by which Lord Curzon ameliorated the position of the officers of every branch of the executive, from the highest to the lowest. His most famous reform in this respect, the curtailment of reports and statistical returns, was only incidentally meant for the benefit of Government servants, and was chiefly intended to erase a serious blot upon the

administration of India. He said in his third Budget speech:

> "The system of report-writing that prevails in India is at once the most perfect and most pernicious in the world—the most perfect in its orderly marshalling of facts and figures, and in its vast range of its operation; the most pernicious in the remorseless consumption of time, not to mention print and paper, that it involves, and in its stifling repression of independence of thought or judgment."

In conjunction with the local Governments, he was able gradually to effect substantial reductions in the enormous masses of printed matter which pour from the Government presses. In 1903 he announced that 300 obligatory reports to the Government had been abolished, that the number of pages of letterpress of the remaining reports had been reduced from 18,000 to 8600, and the number of pages of statistics from 17,400 to 11,300. Any one who has chanced to see an agonised Government officer in the throes of producing his annual report will appreciate the relief thus provided. It was said at the time that the fetish of ink is worshipped so inveterately in the Indian system that all the edicts of Lord Curzon would only have a transient effect. My impression is that some at least of the results have been permanent. On the other hand, although the whole country resounded with his repeated fulminations, although a special officer was placed in charge of Government printing, I observe that whereas when he landed in India the Government were spending £470,000 annually upon stationery and printing, the charges under this head not only showed a slight increase during his Viceroyalty, but within three years of his departure had swollen to the huge total of £786,000. I am quite unable to explain the cause of this rapid growth, which seems to call for inquiry. The comment of the authorities was that there had been "a gradual and inevitable increase," which was a statement of fact, but not an explanation.

More recently the outlay under this head has been slightly reduced. Mr. Gokhale has more than once called attention to the question. It has been suggested to me that a possible contributory cause is that centralisation has increased. Provincial Governments are more frequently called upon to report on ephemeral occurrences, and they pour forth printed information in anxious self-defence.

While the merits of Lord Curzon's remarkable crusade against reports cannot be denied, the results were not wholly satisfactory. In its original form the average Indian report was not so perfect as he suggested; in its revised form it became a repellent collection of the driest bones imaginable. I venture to take exception to the spirit in which he approached the subject. He always spoke as though the reports were meant solely for the information of the Government; I contend that they should be devised for the information of the public also. In a scattered country with limited representative institutions, it is peculiarly necessary for the Government, not only to tell the public what they are doing, but to try to interest them in their work. The brilliant and comprehensive Budget speeches of Lord Curzon, in which he was wont annually to survey the entire field of administration, to some extent served this purpose; but just as these speeches were without precedent, so they have unfortunately found no imitator. Lord Curzon rightly sought to restrict the stream of reports, but he did nothing to vivify their spirit. A more depressing and uninstructive series of compilations it is impossible to conceive.

Take, for example, the great work of irrigation in which the Government of India are engaged. An inquirer might search through the whole range of annual irrigation reports without gaining any clear practical comprehension of its objects or results. Both the irrigation and forestry reports are extremely inadequate. On the other hand, the annual "Review of the Trade of India" prepared by Mr. F. Noël-Paton is an admirable publication, in which the broad facts are

not concealed behind clouds of unnecessary figures. One of the most slovenly and unsatisfactory reports associated with India is the annual "Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India," which is presented to Parliament without a blush by the Secretary of State. Members of Parliament usually speak of this annual "Statement" in terms of the most profound respect and admiration. They refer to it with awestruck adjectives, such as are generally applied to Shakespeare by people who do not read him. I can only conclude that in their case the "Statement" encounters a similar fate. The one thing it does not do is to disclose a clear picture of the progress and condition of India in any given year. It is compiled upon an entirely wrong basis, for it is little but a defective condensation of the provincial administration reports. The Secretary of State is not responsible for its form, which is prescribed by an obsolete provision of the Act of 1858. The result of this provision, which ought to be amended, is that attention is diffused over masses of petty provincial details. No attempt is made to elucidate the general principles and factors which have governed the Indian Administration during the year. Everything is dealt with by a multitude of references to provinces, almost as though the Home Government tried to explain its work of the year by describing its effect upon each county. Some of the introductory paragraphs prefixed to each chapter have been appearing, practically without variation, for more than a decade. Meanwhile events of Imperial importance are frequently ignored. A single example will suffice to illustrate my meaning. Perhaps the most important event of the year 1902 in India was the presentation of the report of the Indian Universities Commission, which, as I have explained, had far-reaching political results. The Secretary of State, in his annual "Statement," gravely informed Parliament that the Commission's recommendations "cannot be adequately summarised here," and dismissed the whole

subject in a couple of lines; but he gave innumerable facts in every chapter about the administration of the small and unimportant province of Coorg, which most people would be puzzled to point out upon a map.

No Government in the Empire is subjected to so much criticism as the Government of India. Upon no Government is it more incumbent to make known to the world the character of their undertakings. They complain bitterly that they are misunderstood, and that insufficient interest is taken in their work, but they do not make the slightest attempt to present the records of their labours to the public in a form which can be readily comprehended. They grumble because the people of India feel no gratitude for the benefits conferred upon them; but how can they be expected to do so when the results are not shown to them in a way they can understand? Travellers are condemned for painting inaccurate pictures of British rule; but do the Government do anything effectual to help strangers to right conclusions?

The administrators of India might very well profit by studying the methods of the Dominions. The visitor to Canada is not long left in doubt about the work of the Canadian Government. He finds ample information readily accessible in a simple form about every branch of the administration, about the condition of the country, its finances, its resources, its progress, and its possibilities. Much of it, no doubt, is meant to attract settlers; but the Government of India have a more urgent duty to perform. They have to justify their work to the people of India first, and the people of England afterwards, and they do not try to do so. India spends three-quarters of a million pounds every year upon stationery and printing, and yet does not produce a solitary publication fit to be compared even in the remotest degree with the "Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia." In that admirable book, which should serve as a model for the whole Empire, Mr. G. H. Knibbs, the

Commonwealth Statistician, brings together in a compact form, with illuminating explanations, every variety of information which either Australians or their visitors are likely to require. The Government of India content themselves with issuing once in a lifetime an excellent Gazetteer in twenty-four volumes, partially out of date.

One recent instance of the unfortunate lack of purpose and forethought which distinguishes the publications of the Government of India may be quoted. They have given the people larger privileges of representation and speech in the Legislative Councils. The meetings of the Councils are more frequent, the debates are longer, and it is on these occasions that the spokesmen of the Government are wont to expound and defend their policy. The very first corollary of this development should have been the publication of the official reports of the debates in a handy form, as is the custom in every other assembly in the world. These debates provide almost the only opportunity the Government of India and the provincial Governments possess of being heard in their own defence; but nothing was done until recently. The Imperial reports are now better printed, though far too bulky; but the rest still appear in a collection of large loose sheets attached to the provincial "Gazettes." They are only obtainable with some difficulty in India, and are almost unprocurable in England; yet upon them the Government of India and the provincial Governments have to depend for their justification to the British public. If they would take down from their shelves the dusty records of the Legislative Council meetings before the Mutiny, they would find that their predecessors of more than fifty years ago had a far better comprehension of the importance of reports, and the manner in which they should be printed, than exists to-day. It is a curious fact that all Indian reports were far better done under Company rule, and that with the advent of Crown rule they rapidly deteriorated in quality, though the quantity increased

enormously. The explanation that more time was available in the old days does not suffice; and I believe the true reason to be that the servants of the Company had to justify their work, and that the obligation does not appear to lie in the same degree upon the servants of the Crown. There are no modern Government publications comparable with the "Selections from Government Records" which appeared in the first half of last century. The present craze of official secrecy was also then unknown.

A sequel to Lord Curzon's crusade against reports was his endeavour to reduce the number of letters and despatches written in the secretariats. This was a reform which did not come so prominently before the public, but probably it had even more beneficial results. I hope they may not be ephemeral. He tried to induce the departments to settle their business in personal consultations, to avoid protracted controversies, to reduce the practice of "noting," and to prevent delays in arriving at conclusions. The memorandum in which these improvements were recommended was drafted by himself, and a series of instructions was based upon it. He was an uncompromising foe to those interminable and inconclusive deliberations in which a bureaucracy delights. Of all the epithets which have ever been applied to him, I think "bureaucratic" to be the least deserved. He was in many ways the very antithesis of the bureaucratic spirit. He was eager to get things done. Nothing gave him more joy than to discover some venerable question which had been mouldering on the files for years, and to settle it for ever. At the farewell dinner given to him by the members of the United Service Club at Simla, he told this story in a moment of humorous reminiscence:

"I remember in my first year settling a case that had been pursuing the even tenor of its way without, as far as I could ascertain, exciting the surprise or ruffling the temper

of an individual for sixty-one years. I drove my pen like a stiletto into its bosom. I buried it with exultation, and I almost danced upon the grave."

In 1901 he also effected important alterations in the Leave Rules, the principal result of which was that officers were allowed to combine privilege leave with furlough. The change conferred a considerable boon, but it had the far more valuable consequence that it improved the administrative system by helping to check frequent short transfers. At the same time, orders were framed with the object of putting an end to the game of "general post" which hindered continuity of control in the secretariats and in the districts. The whole administration had become a phantasmagoria of fleeting officials. In some provinces there were appointments which had been filled by half a dozen men within a year. Lord Curzon gave directions which ensured that in future officers appointed to a particular district should stay there a reasonable time.

The re-organisation of the Political Department was not finally sanctioned until after Lord Curzon's departure. It provided separate cadres for military officers and for civil servants, but directed that the highest posts were to be allotted by selection among both branches. The rates of pay were increased. The scheme was only provisional, and will be revised again. In the Indian Medical Service, the pay of all grades of officers in civil employment was raised, and the position and prospects of Indian subordinate medical officers and hospital assistants were improved. Again, the disadvantages under which the "uncovenanted" officials (mostly Indians) laboured in nearly every branch of the provincial executives were substantially ameliorated.

I am not making a catalogue; I am only selecting casual illustrations. Just as every department was thoroughly overhauled, so there was not a servant of the Government, from Members of Council to the humblest doorkeeper in a

district office, who did not in some way derive additional personal benefit, and find his emoluments or privileges increased, during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. These boons were not forgotten. As the time for his departure drew near, tributes poured in upon the Viceroy who had made it his business to look to the interests, not only of officers in high place, but still more of the multitude of humble and obscure men enrolled in the service of the Crown. From poor telegraph clerks, from Customs officers in distant ports, from grateful Eurasians, from lowly men in the Salt Department, from railway subordinates, from every class of Government servant, many of whom had never even seen the Viceroy, came sorrowing messages of thanks and farewell. One touching example must suffice. The clerks of the Simla Secretariat, whose scale of allowances he had tried to improve, asked leave to present a farewell address. They said they were aware that in doing so they were "taking a course unprecedented in the annals of our service"; but they could not allow the Viceroy to leave the country without recording their expressions of gratitude. They gave as their reason:

"While absorbed in the momentous problems of state policy, your Lordship never lost an opportunity of ameliorating the condition of the very large body of public servants known by the general name of the 'Uncovenanted Service.'"

Out of sheaves of testimony, this simple and spontaneous acknowledgment from some of the humblest but most deserving men in Government employ is the only one that I shall quote. Lord Curzon's reply disclosed a phase of his work which until then had remained almost unknown to the general public. He said:

"Ever since I came to India my heart has been drawn towards the subordinate officers of our Government. I

found after a little experience, not merely that these classes were rather forlorn and friendless, but that there was a tendency, when they made mistakes or were guilty of offences, to be somewhat hard upon them, and on occasions to hustle them out of employment or pension upon hasty and inadequate grounds. . . .

"I set myself, therefore, to try to understand the position, and, if possible, to alleviate the lot of the classes of whom I have been speaking, and the new rules which we have passed or systems that we have introduced about the abolition of fining in the departments of Government, the observance of public holidays, the leave rules of the subordinate Services, the rank and pay of the higher grades among them, and the allowances and pensionary prospects of all classes—have, I hope, done a good deal to mitigate some of the hardships that have been felt, and to place them in a more assured and comfortable position in the future. . . .

"Personally, I have taken, if possible, an even warmer interest in the opportunities that have presented themselves to me of investigating memorials and grievances, and now and then of rescuing individuals from excessive punishment or undeserved disgrace. You know, for I have often stated it in public, the feelings that I hold about the standards of British rule in this country. We are here before everything else to give justice; and a single act of injustice is, in my view, a greater stain upon our rule than much larger errors of policy or judgment. I have sometimes thought that in dealing with subordinates, and particularly native subordinates, there is a tendency to be rather peremptory in our our methods and to visit transgression, or suspected transgression, with the maximum of severity. For flagrant misconduct, whether among high or low, European or native, I have never felt a ray of sympathy. But I have always thought that a small man whose whole fortune and livelihood were at stake deserved just as much consideration for his case, if not more so, than a big man, and that we ought to be very slow to inflict a sentence of ruin unless the proof were very strong. . . . A Viceroy of India . . . as the final court of appeal on every case, great or small, amid

the vast population of India, has chances that occur to but few. I think that he ought to take them. I have tried to do so. I can recall long night hours spent in the effort to unravel some tangled case of alleged misconduct resulting in the dismissal of a poor unknown native subordinate. Perhaps those hours have not been the worst spent of my time in India, and the simple letters of gratitude from the score or more of humble individuals whom I have thus saved from ruin have been equally precious in my eyes with the resolutions of public bodies or the compliments of princes."

In his relations with the Indian Civil Service, Lord Curzon had one prominent characteristic which he possessed in greater measure than any other modern Viceroy: he never forgot "the men in the districts." "India," he said, "may be governed from Simla or Calcutta; but it is administered from the plains." The first list of suggested honours that he submitted to the Queen-Empress showed that he was determined to secure recognition for the officers who were toiling among the people; and in the later distinctions conferred upon his recommendation the same principle always found exemplification. When he was inquiring into the qualifications of any officer, he rarely failed to ask how much of his service had been spent "in the districts." Men who clung to the secretariats throughout their service in the hope of accelerating promotion met with small mercy at his hands; and he tried—I fear not successfully—to ensure that periodical reversion to district service should be a recommendation, and not a handicap, in the competition for coveted posts. It is largely owing to his influence that the type of officer, once very prevalent, who had practically no experience of district work, is fast disappearing from the Indian Civil Service. He was extremely severe on incapacity, and too impatient of mediocrity; but the men in whom he once placed reliance knew that he would back them up, and never leave them in

the lurch. I never heard of a single case in the whole of his Viceroyalty in which a good man had reason to complain that he had not been supported by the Viceroy in an emergency. Sometimes he was almost too loyal to the men he trusted; and in more than one case the beliefs he had formed were not quite justified when the test was applied. It was a fault that can be lightly passed over.

The Civil Service does not desire praise. It wants support; and there was not a civilian in India who did not know that he had in the Viceroy a champion who would leap into the breach to defend him against attack so long as he was in the right. Thus Lord Curzon inspired in the Service a confidence which, not without notorious reason, has waned in more recent years. He was a hard taskmaster, occasionally outwardly unsympathetic, and at times sparing in thanks; but he had the secret of encouraging men to do the best that was in them, and no Viceroy was ever more devotedly served. He was as jealous a custodian of the traditions of the Civil Service as the officers of that Service themselves. From his youth he had held it in the highest admiration, and he believed it to be charged with the most sacred trust in the Empire. If he expected much, it was because he was not willing that so proud and honourable a Service should ever fall below the most exalted standard of public duty. A defect was that he did not sufficiently encourage—and occasionally resented—that independence of thought which every Viceroy should tolerate as one of the best and oldest characteristics of the Service.

A work which Lady Curzon had greatly at heart, and did much to forward, may fittingly find record in this chapter. On the death of the Queen-Empress, Lady Curzon instituted, as a memorial to that revered monarch, a fund for the provision of midwives to Indian women, which was established on a substantial basis. At a later stage, during her last two years in India, she framed a scheme for

establishing an Indian Nursing Association, for the provision of nurses for Europeans in up-country stations. A committee was convened at Simla, many meetings were held at which she presided, and detailed proposals were ultimately drafted and submitted to the Secretary of State, though the project was intended to be in the main self-supporting. Afterwards she had repeated interviews with the home authorities on the subject, and devoted much time to remodelling the original scheme. It had been completely redrafted, and was under the consideration of the heads of local governments, when Lady Curzon finally left India. It was ultimately carried into effect upon somewhat different and larger lines.



The late Lady Curzon

VIII

PLAGUE AND FAMINE

I. THE PROBLEM OF PLAGUE

THE recurring pandemics of plague which have swept throughout the world are one of the mysteries of history, and their effect upon the destinies of mankind has never been adequately demonstrated. Time and again plague has unexpectedly emerged from some obscure corner, cut broad swathes through the human race, and vanished amid remote mountains or swamps, leaving behind it a trail of countless graves. Its last disappearance was so complete that twenty years ago most men thought it had gone for ever. In England the prayer for use "in time of any common plague or sickness" awoke no dim traditions. Historians had almost ceased to note the deep marks plague left upon the national life. Yet they are still visible. Every English hedgerow is a reminder of plague. The Black Death destroyed half the population of England. The consequent scarcity of labour gave the final blow to villeinage and serfdom. When farming in common ceased it became necessary to define the fields, and the hedgerows mark the change in land tenure. Plague brought about the emancipation of the English labouring classes. It was the direct forerunner of the Free Labourer, who has been the strength of England. The words of John Ball might have been spoken by any labour leader of to-day; and the records of the labour agitation of the fourteenth century help, by the way, to a better and more sympathetic comprehension of some of the events of 1911.

Plague helped to kill the textile industries of the Eastern Counties, and thus laid the foundations of the modern prosperity of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and to a lesser extent of the West of England. It accelerated the decline of the power and wealth of the monasteries, and thus brought nearer the Reformation. It revolutionised the life of the Church; and it greatly modified Church architecture, for many structures begun in one period had to be completed in another, when architectual ideals had altered. It crushed the University of Oxford for half a century, and led William of Wykeham to establish his great foundations for the revival of learning. The garden of New College is believed to be on the site of an old plague-pit. Plague even facilitated the growth of English literature. Up to the time of the Black Death French was the principal language of the schools and of the wealthy. So many teachers died that a new race of schoolmasters arose who insisted on giving instruction in the English tongue, and the way was thereby paved for "Piers the Plowman" and Chaucer.

In wandering about Europe after the extraordinary effects of plague had been burned upon my mind in India, I have often been struck by the frequency with which reminiscences of plague are met. In Vienna, the green dome of the Karlskirche, and the Trinity column in the Graben—surely the only example in existence of clouds laboriously represented in stone—alike commemorate the end of an epidemic. The glorious church of Santa Maria della Salute at Venice was built as a votive offering to the Virgin for having stayed the plague, which in the seventeenth century carried off 140,000 persons in the city and lagoons within sixteen months. An endless list of instances could be compiled. One need not go abroad to find them. Across the Downs at Clifton is a narrow thoroughfare still known as "Pitch and Pay Lane." As its name implies, it marks the spot where the country people were wont during a plague epidemic to deposit provisions, for which the stricken

citizens of Bristol left cash in exchange. In Gloucestershire I once witnessed the dispersal of a riotous mob which had turned out to protest against the conversion into a smallpox hospital of an ancient and lonely building locally known as "the pest-house." The very name of plague had been forgotten by the people, but the vague terror survived.

The earliest appearances of plague are only obscurely recorded, but we know that in the fourteenth century it devastated Europe. The mortality in that appalling pandemic has been calculated by Hecker at 25,000,000. It remained in Europe in fluctuating degree until the first quarter of the eighteenth century, after which it was rarely seen except in the neighbourhood of the Balkans. Very early in the nineteenth century it was almost lost from view. Even in India it gradually became only a shadowy legend. The medical authorities of Bombay, which was afterwards to be smitten so heavily, reported in good faith in 1887 that it had never to their knowledge existed in the city, although a subsequent search showed that severe visitations were noted in the ancient archives. Doctors forgot how to treat plague, Governments ceased to guard against it. But it had never left the earth. By some inexplicable process, it had withdrawn into half a dozen spots in Asia where travellers rarely penetrated, and where its continuous existence was either unknown or disregarded. When seen it was usually called by other names. No one suspected that any fresh danger to the world was lurking in a curious disease which clung in an endemic form to the mountains south of Mecca, to the swamps of Mesopotamia, to a single district on the Indian slopes of the Himalayas, to the uplands of Yunnan in Western China, and probably to parts of Turkestan, the Caucasus, and the barren shores of the Caspian. Once, in 1877–78, it flared out near Astrakhan, in European Russia, and was duly recognised as plague. All Europe grew momentarily alarmed, but the epidemic seemed to die away as mysteriously as it came, and was wiped out of

recollection. It never really disappeared afterwards from the Volga, though it passed unnoticed.

A far larger menace was even then developing. In the seventies of last century, plague awoke again in the recesses of Yünnan, and began to move slowly outwards. No notice was taken of the stories of its ravages told by stray explorers. It took more than a decade effectively to reach the Chinese coast, where it exacted a cruel toll in Canton and Hong-Kong in 1894 and succeeding years. By the end of the nineteenth century it had infected the whole world; but no one can say why it reappeared once more in renewed strength and virulence. The ultimate causes of the rise and decline of great epidemic diseases have perplexed mankind all through the ages. We know how to fight cholera, but not why it remains one year comparatively quiescent in the swamps of Lower Bengal, and in another spreads far and wide in Europe. When we try to account for the larger phenomena of the vast cycles of pestilence we find ourselves on the edge of a still unfathomed chasm in human knowledge. Epidemics are often ascribed to the influence of other great natural calamities, but India endured famine after famine in the second half of last century without any coincident outbreak of plague.

The existence of plague in Bombay was first suspected in July 1896. Cases which were afterwards regarded as plague were definitely noted on August 15. The first death registered as due to "bubonic fever" was recorded on August 31. The first official intimation that plague existed in the city was made on September 23. A theory that it was brought by pilgrims from Kumaon in the Himalayas has found some supporters, but there is practically no doubt that the infection was conveyed by rats on ships from Hong-Kong. The first human cases were noted near grain warehouses close to the docks, which were infested by rats. The epidemic gradually spread into every part of India. The recorded deaths from plague in India up to June 1911

numbered 7,580,000, and are probably considerably more; and a careful comparison of data leads to the belief that most of these deaths were in addition to the ordinary rate of mortality from normal diseases, which is already high. Since the Black Death of the fourteenth century there has been no such mortality from plague as has occurred in India in our own time. In the years after 1896 plague appeared in sporadic form in every continent. It effected lodgments, mostly ineffectual, in fifty-one countries. In no instance did the outbreak attain really important dimensions, and public anxiety was therefore invariably lulled. The delusion that the white races are practically exempt—they are certainly more resistant, and better protected by clothing and habits of life—fostered the tendency to treat the matter lightly. Statesmen talked of improved sanitation. They forgot that it was not improved sanitation which caused plague to hide itself in a few wild places after the eighteenth century.

There are several varieties of plague, but its principal forms are divided into bubonic, pneumonic, and septicæmic plague, though a single case may in turn exhibit symptoms of all three varieties. Pneumonic plague is the most fatal form; there are few recoveries, and death sometimes supervenes in a few hours. The alarming outbreak of plague in Manchuria in the winter of 1910–11 was almost entirely pneumonic. The common form in India is bubonic, though the other varieties are occasionally met. The period of incubation is now reckoned at about six days, though it may be longer. Buboes appear, generally in the groin and armpits, but sometimes elsewhere, about the second day of illness. Drowsiness and mental stupor are manifest from the outset, and the patient sometimes suggests a condition of intoxication. There is usually a high temperature, much fever, coughing, and at length delirium. Sometimes there is an outbreak of pustules on the skin, which possibly gave rise to the name of "the Black Death." Death occurs about the fifth

or sixth day, though often much earlier, but if the patient survives for twelve days recovery is probable. The mortality in bubonic cases in India has varied from 70 to 85 per cent. but has sometimes been appreciably higher. In pneumonic cases the infection is usually conveyed direct from man to man, through expectoration, or by inhalation of the patient's breath; but in bubonic cases there is an intermediary host. It was demonstrated in India that this host was usually the rat and its parasites.

The knowledge of the connection of rats with plague is as old as written history. The Philistines were told to "make images of your emerods (buboes), and images of your mice that mar the land." From the beginning of the Bombay epidemic, it was known that rats were associated with the infection, for it was noticed that they died in large numbers in the corn warehouses. The problem which soon presented itself to the investigators in India was: How is the infection transmitted from rat to rat, and from rat to man? It occurred to numerous inquirers that some insect, probably a parasite of rats and possibly a rat flea, carried the infection from rat to rat, but though several inconclusive experiments were made the idea remained at first almost a mere theory. Various Continental investigators carried it much further, but it was reserved for the Indian Plague Research Commission to establish the rat-flea theory beyond all question by its elaborate and quite independent investigations at Bombay during 1905–6 and subsequent years.

The common Indian rat flea is *Pulex cheopis*. It does not, as is frequently supposed, remain always on the body of the rat, but, like all rat fleas, frequents the rat's nest, only touching the rat when it wants to feed. *Pulex cheopis* seems quite invulnerable to plague. When it sucks blood from an infected rat it may imbibe as many as 5000 plague germs into its stomach. These germs multiply enormously in the stomach, and when the flea wants to feed again, if it takes blood from a healthy rat it may transmit the infection

to it. A single flea can infect a rat, but more than one bite is usually necessary. Fleas at once desert a dead rat. If no other rats are near when the flea wants to feed once more, it will bite a human being, and may infect him. It is by this process that the bubonic form of plague is usually transmitted amongst mankind in India. It should be added that if a flea, after becoming infected, does not again bite an infected animal, its period of infectivity lasts from fifteen days to three weeks. By the end of that time its stomach has undergone a cleansing process, and the flea is free from plague germs. A large amount of evidence goes to prove that bubonic plague is rarely transmitted from man to man. The agent is almost invariably the rat flea, and the infection is from rat to man by means of the flea. Plague epidemics in India coincide with the season when rat fleas are most prevalent; and this season varies in different parts of the country. At present one factor is not finally explained. It is quite clear that the flea receives the plague bacilli into its stomach with the blood of its host. But when it inserts its "pricker" and mandibles into another animal, how does it infect it? There is no complete answer to the problem.

The rat most commonly found in India is the black rat, *Mus rattus*. It lives in close association with human dwellings, and is the chief source of infection. The bigger brown or Norwegian rat, *Mus decumanus*, which predominates in England, is rarely found in India except in a few of the larger ports. Both brown and black rats are equally susceptible to plague; but the reason why the black rat carries infection in India is that it is in constant contact with the people. In towns and villages alike, it burrows in the floors and walls of the houses, and finds in the grain stored in every house an ample supply of food. Even in the model tenements built in some of the great cities, and supposed to be rat-proof, the habits of the people attract rats. They keep their food on the floor or on rough shelves, and the

rooms of the poor are littered with rubbish. Refuse is thrown into the streets in defiance of by-laws, and the rats thrive upon it. Even well-to-do Indians who have not adopted European habits sometimes keep cows and goats and fowls in their houses. In the villages these tendencies are accentuated. Animals are tethered in the courtyards. Fragments of grain are scattered everywhere, and wherever there is grain there are rats. Bare feet and legs increase the chances of infection; the religious injunction not to take life preserves the rats from attack. Rats and men live together, and that is why the plague spreads in India.

In the first great plague epidemic in Bombay there were a few European cases. After a time it was noticed that Englishmen did not seem very liable to contract plague. We thought it was due to the superior constitution of the white races, and consoled ourselves with the thought that we were mostly picked men in good health. We were not entirely wrong, because Europeans seem to recover from bubonic plague more frequently than Indians; but for the most part it was pure delusion, as we realised long afterwards. The Englishman is probably just as liable to contract plague to-day as he was in the Middle Ages, so far as his physical organisation is concerned. The reason why Englishmen have rarely contracted plague in India is that they rarely come into contact with rats. Their exemption would disappear in the presence of an epidemic of pneumonic plague, in which the bacilli are conveyed by the breath from man to man. It is suspected that the Black Death was more largely pneumonic; and it is further thought possible that human fleas may then have been agents of infection, though not now a factor of importance.

No city in the world, not even Hong-Kong as it was in the old days, offered such a breeding-ground for the plague bacillus as Bombay did at the end of 1896. Outwardly "a city of palaces and palms," with a magnificent harbour and

life-giving sea-breezes which never fail, it was nevertheless the home of an immense population living under the most unwholesome conditions. At the southern end of the island the native city had been crammed within restricted limits, not by official mandate, but by the greed of property-owners. Huge insanitary tenement houses had been erected, which almost rivalled the "sky-scrapers" of New York in her less aspiring days. Eighty per cent. of the million inhabitants were living in tenements of a single room; and the average number of occupants of each room was four. Many of these rooms had neither light nor ventilation; into them the sunlight could never penetrate; large numbers of the houses were deliberately built back to back; and in these noisome dens, with damp mud floors, rats and humanity swarmed. Bombay owed its plight to a rapid influx of population, to a great rise in land-values, and to defective building regulations inadequately administered by a Corporation which had inherited a situation with which it was unable to cope. When plague came there was a panic. I witnessed the scenes of that first mad exodus at the end of 1896, when the railway stations were crammed with people who fought for places in the trains, and when the roads of Salsette were thronged with fugitives fleeing from the pestilence, they knew not whither. By February 1897, it was calculated that 400,000 people had fled from the city, and they carried the plague with them.

Yet the spread of plague throughout India was comparatively slow. It was not recognised at Calcutta until April 1898. Though the first cases in the Punjab were detected in October 1897, the mortality in the province did not become serious until 1902. The United Provinces did not suffer very severely until 1904 and 1905. The million limit in the plague mortality of all India in any single year was not passed until 1904, when 1,143,993 deaths from plague were recorded. Burma was not infected in an epidemic form until 1905. The worst year in the Punjab

was not reached until 1907. There were occasional fluctuations, and in 1908 the total recorded plague mortality throughout India dropped to 156,000, although in the preceding year it had been 1,315,000. The present tendency is again upward, and for the six months ending June 1911 the plague deaths numbered 650,000.

The incidence of plague has been curiously unequal. Eastern Bengal and Assam have practically escaped altogether, probably because the conditions in the southern districts are unfavourable to rats. Bengal lost less than 600,000 people from plague in twelve years, though fourth on the list of provinces affected. The Madras Presidency has always been comparatively free, though I doubt whether its escape is primarily due to its plague regulations, as is sometimes suggested. Neither the City nor the Presidency of Bombay have had a really bad plague year since 1904; in fact, plague has for some time ceased to have any marked effect upon the prosperity of the City of Bombay, whose recuperative powers have been marvellous. Its life-blood is rapidly replenished from the country districts. The worst sufferers in recent years have been the Punjab and the United Provinces, the Punjab most of all. The Punjab, including its native states, had lost over 2,250,000 people from plague by the end of 1910, out of a total population, as recorded in 1901, of under 22,000,000. These figures tell their own tale. The mortality in the Punjab has been greatest in the villages, but some of the towns have been badly affected also; in 1907 the town of Dinga endured the phenomenal plague mortality of 119·20 per 1000. Comparisons of the general and even the provincial statistics do not reveal the truth about plague, which can only be ascertained by examining the figures for particular districts.

The appearance of plague in Bombay naturally found the authorities unprepared. They had to fight an almost unknown disease of which they had no experience. Under the direction of the Governor, Lord Sandhurst, a series of

rigorous preventive and precautionary measures were gradually introduced. It has been alleged that if the Bombay Government had acted more promptly the spread of plague in India might have been averted. I do not believe that any human agency could have stopped plague from spreading, for the infection must have been in the city for some time before it was detected. The Bombay Government were far too slow in moving, but gradually they devised an elaborate system of house-to-house visitation, disinfection, evacuation of infected premises, health camps, and a scheme of land quarantine and medical inspection. In March 1898, there was a riot in Bombay among Mahomedan weavers, several of whom were shot by the police. They were incensed by the plague restrictions, and they represented the general feeling among the native population, though their particular ebullition was due to a minor misunderstanding. The larger issue was that while rigorous measures can be adopted for a single epidemic, an enormous population cannot be subjected to vexatious railway quarantine, and endure endless interference with its movements and its liberty, for a whole generation. It became evident that plague would continue. Lord Sandhurst saw that milder methods must be adopted. He had in vain poured out money like water, and his Government were almost bankrupt. In September 1898, he swept away the quarantine system, and substituted regulations of a palliative character, in which medical inspection of railway passengers found a prominent place. He said in his farewell speech that he meant to make no apology for his Administration, and it may be added that none was needed. Few Governors in India have had a more trying experience, for he had to fight famine as well; and if his plague measures failed, it was because circumstances were too strong for him. None who came afterwards have done better, and their courage has not been tried in the same degree.

The position when Lord Curzon arrived in 1899 was that

the experience of two years in the Bombay Presidency had demonstrated, first, that the struggle with plague was likely to be a long one, and second, that it was impossible to impede the free movement of many millions by harassing regulations which had not even the justification of efficacy. A Plague Commission, with Professor (afterwards Sir Thomas) Fraser at its head, had been sent out at the request of Lord Elgin, and was still perambulating the country. Mr. Haffkine, an expert who had done much original research, had prepared a prophylactic fluid from sterilised virus of the disease, which was being tentatively employed for protective inoculation. Plague was slowly spreading, though at that time still chiefly confined to the Bombay Presidency.

The report of the Plague Commission appeared in sections. It approved of Mr. Haffkine's prophylactic, which, it considered, conferred a limited degree of protection. It made many useful suggestions regarding the measures to be adopted in dealing with plague, but threw little real light upon the origin of the disease and its method of dissemination. The report as a whole was far too voluminous and overloaded with detail, and some of its conclusions are modified by later experience. Lord Curzon issued a Resolution in June 1900, in which he reviewed, and with few reservations accepted, such opinions of the Commission as were then available. He deprecated compulsory measures, preferring a policy of assistance and persuasion, such as Lord Sandhurst had already promulgated in Bombay. He restricted the practice of searching houses, disapproved of compulsory inoculation—which had rarely been resorted to —provided that removal to hospitals should not be compulsory except in certain limited cases, laid down the principles on which infected villages were to be evacuated, and encouraged disinfection. There were many other instructions, but the general purpose of the policy thus formulated was to discourage coercive measures, to invoke the co-operation of the people, and to consult the public convenience. It

was a policy which may not commend itself to health authorities dealing with a European population, but it was the only possible policy in India at that critical juncture. It developed upon prudent principles the earlier policy of relaxation adopted in Bombay, while it provided additional safeguards. Plague measures in India have ever since followed these lines, with such modifications as are from time to time thought necessary.

Lord Curzon was not able to check the spread of plague; no one could have done that; but while doing all that was possible, he sought to prevent the exasperation of the people. A wise Egyptian pasha once said that "an Oriental population prefers death to worry," and that is the difficulty which confronts all plague officers in India. Even as it was, there had been occasional further outbreaks of public disapproval, and in April 1900, a mob attacked a plague camp at Cawnpore and killed five policemen. Lord Curzon visited the plague-stricken areas in Bombay and Poona, inspected the plague hospitals, and personally investigated the operation of the preventive measures. After the Plague Commission had pronounced its benediction upon Mr. Haffkine's prophylactic, he tried to persuade the people to be inoculated. As an example, he and all his staff underwent inoculation on the eve of a visit to Bombay; and irreverent under-secretaries were afterwards wont to declare with a chuckle that the resultant rise of temperature was duly reflected in the Viceregal minutes during the next few days. In the middle of 1902, the rapid rise of plague mortality in the Punjab, together with the approaching assemblage of large crowds at the Delhi Durbar, caused the Punjab Government to adopt a scheme of inoculation upon an heroic scale. Six million people were to be inoculated, and a number of doctors were brought out from England to assist. The work began in October, and a month later nineteen persons inoculated from a single bottle at the village of Malkowal died of tetanus. The whole scheme was stopped, and inoculation

has never really recovered from the unfortunate impression thus created. Though there were prolonged inquiries, and the usual amount of angry controversy among experts, no one knows to this day how the tetanus germs got into the vaccine used at Malkowal, and the opinions held on the subject are very varied. The general, if limited, efficacy of Mr. Haffkine's prophylactic has long been beyond dispute; but in spite of the assiduous propaganda of Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, the people of India have not yet taken to it very kindly. On the other hand, they submit with great docility to vaccination against small-pox, wherein they set an example to the people of England.

By far the most practical step undertaken by Lord Curzon with regard to plague was adopted by him in 1904. While in England he spoke to a friend of the gravity of the plague problem, and the conversation was recounted to Dr. C. J. Martin, F.R.S., the Director of the Lister Institute. Dr. Martin urged the necessity for further scientific inquiry into the natural history of the plague bacillus, and the manner in which the disease was spread. Hearing of this, Lord Curzon requested Dr. Martin to draw up a scheme of inquiry, with an estimate of cost. Meanwhile Sir Charles Rivaz, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, had, through the Government of India, been pressing upon the India Office the importance of further technical inquiry. The Secretary of State asked Dr. Martin to submit his scheme, and it was accepted. The scheme provided for the appointment of a small Plague Research Commission, consisting of trained bacteriologists from the Lister Institute and selected members of the Indian Medical Service; and for the formation of an advisory committee consisting of representatives of the Royal Society and the Lister Institute, together with nominees of the Secretary of State, to control and scrutinise the work of the Commission. Dr. Martin went to India to start the operations, and the inquiries began early in 1905. The step should have

been taken long before, but it was nearly nine years after plague was first detected at Bombay that the Government began to investigate upon a practical scientific basis its origin and mode of transmission. The Commission, which is still at work, has conducted one of the most comprehensive, compact, and successful pieces of scientific investigation ever undertaken by Englishmen. It has elucidated the rat-flea theory, which I have already described, and there are hopes that its further researches will produce results which should materially assist the war against plague.

An immediate consequence of the discoveries of the Plague Research Commission was the stimulation of the crusade against rats, which had been prosecuted with varying intensity ever since the first epidemic. More recently, however, most provinces have limited their measures of rat destruction to selected areas at particular seasons. If plague, the most destructive agency known, does not materially reduce the number of rats, human endeavours must always be of limited avail. The recent experience of Manchuria suggests that a pneumonic outbreak is much more easily controlled than an epidemic in which the infection is transmitted by rats and fleas. The whole fight with bubonic plague in India remains unequal and somewhat dispiriting, and it will probably so continue until science is able to furnish more efficient remedies for conferring immunity from the disease, and for its cure when contracted. The problem then will be to induce the people of India to use the remedies. The only other hope is that the disease may once more vanish of its own accord. Meanwhile it would be unjust to assume that the work now being done is of little avail. Mr. J. H. Du Boulay once truly remarked in a plague report: "The lives that are lost arrest the attention; no allowance is made for the lives that are saved." Had it not been for the efforts of the Government, the mortality would probably have been far larger.

King Edward recalled the administrators of India from a

certain apathy regarding plague in a message to Lord Minto in 1907, in which he said: "I am deeply moved when I think of the misery that has been borne with such silent patience in all those stricken homes." His Majesty struck a note which, in my belief, has perhaps met with insufficient response in India in recent years. My purpose in reciting, at the opening of this chapter, a few of the effects of plague upon England, was to suggest by analogy that the present visitation cannot have left some provinces of India unscarred. The comparison is very inexact, because the proportion of mortality in England was infinitely greater. Experienced officers have sometimes told me that in their opinion plague leaves surprisingly little impression upon India. Their argument is that in such a teeming population pestilence has no very abiding result. I am bound to say that my own experience leads to very much the same conclusion. I lived for a considerable number of years in a city from which plague was never absent. I have seen the clerk seized at his desk, the servant stretched dead at my gate, the disappearance of one familiar face after another. I have even, when playing golf, seen a woman stagger and fall upon the green as I approached it, and die of plague before she could be moved. Yet after the first mad terror was over the city waxed busy, and grew, and all the thronging funerals never seemed to give more than a momentary check to its feverish prosperity. I sometimes wonder whether we Englishmen judge the situation correctly, and whether plague has not had a deeper effect upon some parts of India than we are able to discern. If you live long in the presence of a great infliction, it becomes commonplace, and ceases to impress. I know now why men who have endured a protracted siege dislike to talk about it, why the historians of past centuries say so little about plague, although they dwelt in its midst. There came a time when we were wearied of the very name of plague, and looked with dull indifference on the flames of death aglow.

I fancy that to discover the true effects of plague, one must go, not to the larger cities, which fill up quickly after an epidemic, but to the villages. There is very little evidence either way in the Government reports. They speak occasionally of the scarcity of labour and the rise of prices. On the other hand, it is said that in the Bombay Presidency the position of the surviving labourers has materially improved, exactly as occurred in England in the fourteenth century. The people with small fixed incomes are believed to have suffered. In some ways plague has been a blessing in disguise. It has given a vast impetus to sanitary measures all over India. Above all, it is producing a complete transformation of the City of Bombay. The operations of the great Improvement Scheme initiated by Lord Sandhurst—Lord Curzon specially attended the inaugural ceremony—continued by Lord Northcote and Lord Lamington, and now being resolutely developed by Sir George Clarke, the present Governor, are changing the face of the city. The foul rookeries are being swept away, wide new thoroughfares are being driven through the native quarters, and the miserable dwellers in squalid dens are regaining their birthright of sunlight and sweet air. In all the years I spent in India I saw nothing to me so terrible as the daily sight of all those vast fetid breeding-houses of death, within earshot of murmuring waves telling of five hundred leagues of wind-swept sunlit ocean. Many of these structures have now disappeared for ever, though much still remains to be done. What the real effect of plague has been upon India I am unable to estimate, and I think the question needs further inquiry; but certain it is that from her bitter adversity the City of Bombay has emerged with renewed heart of grace, and is fashioning the Gate of India afresh with all the unconquerable hope of the Middle Ages.

II. THE GREAT FAMINE

The widespread drought of 1911 in England enabled the people of this country to form, from their own experience, some slight conception of the magnitude of the calamity which befalls India when the rains fail. So far as I am aware, no one had the temerity to hold the Government responsible for the shrinking brooks, the grain that withered in the ear, the stock that had to be sold through lack of pasture, and the rise of prices that caused the effect of the drought to be felt in every English home. When the plains of Australia are whitening with the bones of countless flocks of sheep, it never occurs to any Australian to blame the Commonwealth Ministry. It has always been to me a mystery that a single sensible Englishman could be found ready to give ear to the foolish charge that British rule in India has in any way contributed either to produce famines or to render the people of India less able to resist them than they were before. There is no single aspect of the British control of India upon which impartial investigation can more confidently be challenged; and I may add that nothing redounds more to the credit of the Government of India than the success with which they have gradually evolved a system of dealing with the conditions caused by scarcity, a system admirable in conception, almost automatic in its operation, and unfailing in its efficacy.

A recent book by Sir Theodore Morison, entitled "The Economic Transition in India," does more to destroy a certain series of fallacies about India than any volume with which I am acquainted. One of the subjects discussed is famine. He shows that in England there were periodical famines—"by reason of the intemperateness of the weather," as the Mayor of Plymouth quaintly put it—until the growth of overseas navigation in the time of Elizabeth placed the country in a position of permanent security. France repeatedly suffered from famine until the end of the eighteenth

century; the principal reason was that the means of transport were inefficient, and the pinch was felt most in districts far from the sea. India has been subject to recurring famine throughout her long history. No famine of modern times is comparable to the horrors recorded during such visitations under native rule, when "the highways were full of dead bodies," and "the flesh of a son was preferred to his love." Sir Theodore Morison holds that the use of the term "famine" in India is now "an anachronism and a misnomer." He says:

"The true meaning of the word 'famine' (according to the Oxford Dictionary) is 'extreme and general scarcity of food'; this phenomenon has entirely passed away. Widespread death from starvation, which the word may be held to connote, has also ceased. Death from starvation is indeed extremely rare, even in those districts which are officially described as famine-stricken. 'Famine' now means a prolonged period of unemployment, accompanied by dear food, and this is undoubtedly an economic calamity which inflicts great hardship upon the working classes in India, as it would in any country. The hardship is reflected in an enhanced death-rate; the degree of enhancement is determined by the efficiency of the measures for the relief of the unemployed."

Under native rule, the repeated devastation of the country by internal wars, and the frequent interludes of misgovernment, intensified the results of drought; and there was no organised system of famine relief. Under British rule, a new complication has been presented by the rapid increase of the population. It is not always realised that in the last forty years the population of India has increased by over a hundred millions. On the other hand, the great development of railways within the same period has immensely simplified the problem of the distribution of food in famine areas.

There have been five great famines in India since the

country passed under Crown control after the Mutiny, and the last, in Lord Curzon's time, was by far the greatest. The first, in 1865–67, was chiefly confined to Orissa, in Eastern India; it should be remembered that a famine extending throughout the whole of India is not only unknown, but is almost inconceivable. The Orissa famine caused a heavy mortality, because at that period the district had few means of communication. The relief arrangements were at first inadequate, and afterwards, when it was too late, over-profuse. The second was in Behar, and some adjacent districts of Bengal, in 1873–74, and on that occasion famine relief on modern lines was first instituted, though at enormous and wasteful cost. The third was the great Madras famine of 1876–78, which affected the major portion of Southern India, including many districts outside the Madras Presidency. The distinguishing features of the Madras famine were the institution of tests in the shape of famine works, and a general rigour in the administration of relief which was probably unduly harsh. The Government of India upon that occasion made the memorable declaration that "we say that human life shall be saved at any cost and effort," and that "there are no circumstances in which aid can be refused." Afterwards a Famine Commission, presided over by Sir Richard Strachey, laid down the fundamental principles upon which relief was to be distributed in future. Employment was to be given on relief works to the able-bodied, at a wage sufficient for support, on the condition of performing a suitable task; and gratuitous relief was to be given, in their villages or in poor-houses, to those who were unable to work. Constant inspection of the people in their villages was made the basis of famine organisation. The Government of India stated in 1883 that the famine wage was to be "the lowest amount sufficient to maintain health under given circumstances. While the duty of Government is to save life, it is not bound to maintain the labouring population at its normal level of comfort."

The fourth great famine has been already mentioned in my opening chapter. It occurred in 1896–97, during Lord Elgin's Administration, and was chiefly felt in the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Behar, Bombay, and portions of the Punjab. In the Central Provinces the difficulties of relief were very great, and the famine operations were on the whole defective. A Famine Commission was afterwards appointed, under the presidency of Sir James Lyall, and its report had just been prepared when Lord Curzon landed. It was one of the first pieces of business with which he had to deal. The Commission adhered broadly to the principles laid down after the Madras famine, but recommended a freer extension of gratuitous relief, and a more liberal wage to famine workers.

Before the Commission's recommendations could be finally considered, it became apparent that another famine was impending. The south-west monsoon of 1899 failed almost completely. The people of Western and Central India panted beneath brazen skies, and watched in vain for the rain which never came, and by October it was manifest that the position was such as the British in India had never before been called upon to face. The deficiency in the rainfall was without precedent. Sir John Eliot, the Government Meteorologist, afterwards estimated that the drought of 1899 was "the greatest in extent and in intensity which India has experienced during the last 200 years." The area affected was over 475,000 square miles, with a population of 25,000,000 in British territory, and 30,000,000 in native states. The British provinces within the famine area included the greater part of the Bombay Presidency, much of the Punjab, and the whole of the Central Provinces and Berar; in the native states the famine stretched from Hyderabad to Kathiawar, including Baroda and all Rajputana and Central India. The rich province of Gujerat, which had known no famine for a century, was left desolate. Sir Thomas Holderness has calculated that the

loss in crops alone amounted to £50,000,000 in British India, and £80,000,000 in native states. To the failure of the crops was added a failure of the water-supply in many areas, while the Bombay Presidency and numbers of native states suffered from a fodder famine. Cattle died in millions, and the famous breeds of Gujerat were almost wiped out. A new cause of death began to figure in the mortality returns. The clerks described it as "trefall." It represented the deaths of unfortunate men who had fallen from trees while gathering the withered leaves in the vain hope of saving their cattle. Sir Antony (now Lord) Macdonnell has pointed out that the visitation was peculiar, because over large areas the conditions were those of scarcity rather than famine; but the failure of water and fodder intensified the distress in these areas. Swarms of people from the native states sought refuge in British territory, because the relief conditions were more attractive; and another unusual feature was the extent of the privation among the jungle tribes. The strain was specially intense in the Central Provinces, which had not recovered from the dire experiences of 1897.

In October 1900, Lord Curzon summed up some of the special characteristics of the famine in a vivid passage in which he said:

"It was not merely a crop failure, but a fodder famine on an enormous scale, followed in many parts by a positive devastation of cattle—both plough cattle, buffaloes, and milch kine. In other words, it affected, and may almost be said to have annihilated, the working capital of the agricultural classes. It struck some of them when they were still down from the effects of the recent shock. It struck others, who had never before known what calamity was, and who were crushed and shattered by the suddenness and directness of the blow. It attacked native states, to whose Durbars had never previously been brought home the obligation of famine relief on an extended scale, and

whose dearth of administrative staff was enhanced by the poverty of their financial resources. It laid its hand upon primitive hillmen, unused to discipline or restraint, impulsive, improvident, lazy, living in an almost barbarous state in wild and inaccessible jungles. It sharpened the lurking nomadic instinct of wandering tribes, and sent them aimlessly drifting about the country, a terror to the famine officer, and an incubus to the camps. For a year it never left hold of its victims; and one-half of the year had not elapsed before famine had brought its familiar attendant Furies in its train, and cholera, dysentery, and fever had fallen upon an already exhausted, enfeebled population. This is the picture of suffering that India has presented during the past year."

The full results of an Indian famine take some time to develop. The rush for aid does not set in the moment the rains fail. The real stress begins about October or November, it increases by the following January, and it reaches its greatest height immediately before the rainy season of the following year. When the rains fall the people are able to disperse to sow their crops; but in the last month or two of hot weather, the danger of cholera is very great. On this occasion the growth of famine relief was exceptionally rapid. By January 3,500,000 people were working on the relief works, or were otherwise in receipt of relief; and at the end of July 1900, over 6,500,000 were being relieved. There was no parallel in the history of India, or in that of any other country in the world, said Lord Curzon, to the numbers who had for weeks on end been dependent on the charity of the Government.

In his tour in the late autumn of 1899, Lord Curzon visited many of the centres of distress. In his investigations in the Bombay Presidency, he found occasion to administer a sharp reproof to officials responsible for a somewhat illiberal scale of relief in Gujerat. On the other hand, he considered it necessary to check the unstinted outpouring

of aid in the Central Provinces, where recollections of the still recent criticisms of the Famine Commission seemed to have prompted too lavish doles. A certain flexibility must always accompany the distribution of relief. "I am not," said the Viceroy on his return to Calcutta, "one of those who regard famine relief as an exact science." On January 16, 1900, he presided at a meeting in the Calcutta Town Hall to open a Famine Relief Fund, and made a stirring appeal which met with a ready response. The time was unfavourable, for India had not recovered from the last famine, while the United Kingdom was preoccupied with the Boer War. Nevertheless, India subscribed over £200,000, and the collections in other countries amounted to £785,000, of which sum the United Kingdom sent £577,000. The City of Glasgow alone contributed over £53,000, and £28,000 came from Liverpool, in addition to £106,000 from the rest of Lancashire. Australasia subscribed £50,000, while the handsome contribution from Germany, and the sympathetic message from the Emperor William which accompanied it, are still remembered in India. It should be noted that the United Kingdom had already subscribed the huge sum of £820,000 at the time of the famine of three years earlier.

Perhaps it may not be understood why private charity is needed to supplement the efforts of the Government in time of famine. The reason is that there are many things which the Government, engrossed with the single task of saving life, are unable to do. The charitable funds go to providing clothing and blankets for the sufferers, especially after the rains arrive; to furnishing medical comforts for the sick; to the relief and sustenance of orphans; to helping poor women in *purdah*, who would die rather than appear in public seeking aid; and, chief object of all, to purchasing seed, cattle, fodder, and implements in order to give a fresh start in life to such of the peasantry as are not reached by Government advances.

The telegrams exchanged between the German Emperor

and the Viceroy in May 1900 were so unusual and so interesting that they may well be quoted. The German Emperor telegraphed on May 3:

"Full of the deepest sympathy for the terrible distress in India, Berlin has, with my approval, realised a sum of over half a million of marks. I have ordered it to be forwarded to Calcutta to be placed at your Excellency's disposal. May India feel in this action on the part of the capital of the German Empire a deep sense of the sympathetic love for India which prompted my people, and which emanates from the fact that 'blood is thicker than water.'"

The Viceroy replied on May 4:

"I have the honour to receive your Imperial Majesty's most gracious telegram, the terms of which will create a thrill of gratitude throughout India for the warm-hearted and sympathetic attitude of your capital of Berlin, acting upon the opportune and noble initiative of your Imperial Majesty. It is indeed an illustration of the binding force of kinship, as testified by your Majesty, that the German people should turn a kind thought to the work being done by the British Government in this country for the relief of the terrible suffering with which the poor Indian people are afflicted. On their behalf I venture to acknowledge the generous action of your Imperial Majesty and the most munificent contribution of your people."

At the end of July 1900, Lord Curzon, accompanied by Mr. (now Sir) Walter Lawrence and others, started in fierce heat upon another famine tour through the worst districts of Gujerat, where they met Lord Northcote, the Governor of Bombay, who was also investigating conditions on the spot. It was the most critical moment of the famine. The monsoon was due, and some rain had fallen, but the people swarmed on the relief works, and the cholera had been raging. In more than one camp visited by the Viceroy the sufferers were still dying from cholera. While

the tour was in progress rain set in heavily, and the whole region was changed into a slough. One extract from an account of a visit to a famine camp under these conditions must suffice as a type of several such visits. It describes a halt at Dohad, in the Panch Mahals, on August 1:

"Fine rain was falling when the Viceroy started on horseback. . . . The drizzle increased steadily to a downpour. The roads were in a frightful state, and the horses had difficulty in keeping their feet. Having forded the river the tank work was reached, and the party dismounted in pools of water. A scramble over the *bund* and a tramp through the gluey mud brought the visitors to the camp. A sad sight greeted Lord Curzon and those with him on entering. Overnight a famine-stricken Bhil, driven at last to Government work by starvation, had died on reaching his destination. In spite of the weather a complete tour of the camp was made. . . . Wet to the skin, the party prepared to return. Meanwhile, however, every gutter became a stream, and the river was so swollen that it was impossible to ford. A long detour had to be made, and the party had to ride over a country dangerous at first and doubly so now."

The *Pioneer*, in summing up the results of the tour, said:

"The victims of famine and pestilence gain the belief that a mysterious power will work for their good, and that a great change will suddenly take place. We know that the heavy rain which deluged the famine tracts in Gujerat during Lord Curzon's short tour, and the almost continuous rainfall since, have been regarded by the people as the direct result of the 'Lord Sahib's' appearance on the scene, and for generations to come the story will be told of the miracle that he worked. To attempt to disturb the simple belief of the ignorant villager would be vain; has he not patent facts to justify him in the faith that he holds? If the policy of the rulers of India is to inspire faith among the masses, then it may be claimed that Lord Curzon has gone far to create

a good political effect by his recent tour, not merely in Gujerat itself, but all over India, for his movements have been faithfully chronicled in the native Press, his benevolent spirit has been applauded, and there is unquestionably a wide feeling of satisfaction that he put aside all other public duties for the moment in order to devote his time to one special object. . . .

"Lord Curzon did not merely content himself with halting at this and that station and summoning the famine staff to his railway carriage. With his characteristic energy and desire to know everything in detail, he went conscientiously into the camps and hospitals, seeing with his own eyes how the people fared and how the operations for their relief were carried out. If he had to ride through pelting rain and wade in deep mud, any feeling of personal discomfort was outweighed by the thought that the long-continued drought had come to an end, and that his presence was hailed as that of a god who had commanded the rain to fall."

The view of the native Press is sufficiently attested by the following remarkable extract from the *Indian Mirror* of August 12, 1900:

"Who says that in this prosaic age of infidelity Divine intercession has ceased to work, or that there is no Divine appreciation of human goodness? Our noble Viceroy intensely wished that the famine must cease, and the long-delayed rains come. Such a wish is a prayer. And the prayer has been granted. Lord Curzon started to visit the dry and burnt plains of Gujerat, but he had scarcely done so when the rain fell in torrents, and his prayer was granted even into the full. Take yet another instance of Divine intervention in human affairs. A Bombay telegram says: 'The Mahi river in the Panch Mahals is in flood owing to the heaviness of rains, and the railway line is six feet under water. *Curiously enough, the line was covered just after the Viceroy had passed over it from Dohad, but the water subsided before his return,* AND NO SOONER HAD HE PASSED THAN IT ROSE AGAIN!' The man who telegraphed this remarkable

news used the word 'curious.' That is what any materialist would do. But here to our mind is a double proof of Divine intervention. The gods have begun to bless Lord Curzon. May the blessing light also upon the millions whom the Viceroy loves, and seeks to serve and succour!"

[The italics and capital letters are as originally printed.]

The cost of the famine to the Indian Exchequer was very great. The amount expended in direct relief was £6,670,000. A further sum of £1,585,000 was spent in loans and advances to landholders and cultivators, and only half of this sum was ever recovered. Land revenue was remitted to the extent of £1,833,000. The loans to native states amounted to over £1,800,000, exclusive of guarantees given for loans obtained in the open market. The states are believed to have expended in relief and to have lost in revenue a sum exceeding £4,000,000. I cannot pause to discuss in detail the special aspects of the famine in the native states, nor can I recount the elaborate measures adopted to deal with the fodder famine. The cattle of Gujerat were saved from extinction by the prompt munificence of Lord and Lady Northcote. Lord Northcote established a cattle farm at Chharodi, and sent Mr. Mollison, then Director of Agriculture in Bombay, to collect the pick of the dying herds. The best breed was so nearly extinct that for a long time only three bulls could be found which were worthy of preservation; and about 800 cows were gradually collected. Subsidiary cattle camps were afterwards formed, but out of the 2,000,000 splendid cattle of Gujerat only about 9000 in all were saved. Lord Northcote did many beneficent things during his period of office in Bombay, but nothing he did is held in more grateful remembrance than his salvation of the cattle in Gujerat.

The deeds done in the 1900 famine are worthy of epic narration. To tell them fully would take volumes, and in what I have said I have barely touched the fringe of a vast

and moving story. I have not sketched a tithe of the measures in that tremendous campaign against death, with the lives of nearly 60,000,000 people at stake, which engrossed the energies of the whole Administration, from the Viceroy downwards. And what of the men? Let Sir Frederic Lely, who bore the brunt of the fight in Gujerat, an administrator who knew more of the people of the province and was better beloved than any civilian of his time, give just one passing glimpse:

"There was Maneklal Narbheram, who went a healthy vigorous man to the Wagra *taluka* of the district of Broach, and for six months never spared himself night or day, and then returned, a wreck, to die a year afterwards. A brave and steadfast man who knew what was before him and did it. There was Mulligan, Presbyterian missionary, who when the head of the district was in sore need of strong men volunteered to help and was put in charge of a thousand persons on a relief work, on whom cholera had already taken hold. There was Mawhinney, also Presbyterian missionary, who undertook a similar trust in the adjoining native state of Sunth. Each of them took up his abode among the people in a hut like their own; he restored order and cleanliness; he instilled some of his own courage; and then each within a month of the other was stricken with the disease from which he had saved others, and died the death of a Christian.

"There was Thompson of the Church Missionary Society, who had sole charge of a large district of Bhils in the native states of Northern Gujerat. He was worn out with his heavy burden, and he was seized with cholera when thirty-five miles away from the nearest European, surrounded only by his faithful Bhils. They tried to carry him to headquarters, but on the way he told them to stop under a tree, and there he died. As a comrade wrote afterwards, 'he loved his Bhils and they loved him; he has been true to them in his death and they to him.'

"Lastly, there was Jenkins, a Civil Engineer in the Public Works Department, who was in charge of works in

the Panch Mahals. He was lying in his house with high fever upon him, when word was brought that a certain work would soon be stopped and the people dispersed if further alignment were not made. He got up and travelled to the place, and did what was needed, and then returned, with his illness, of course, much aggravated. In two days he, too, was dead.

"I make no apology for mentioning these names, for the blood of such men is the seed—and the sap—of Empire."

There were many such. Indian and Englishman, they died together. When I hear Secretaries and Under-Secretaries of State telling civil servants that they must be sympathetic and not arrogant, when I hear Anglo-Indians slandered by people who have spent a month in India, when I hear missionaries denounced as "idle loafers," I think of these things, and of all the brave and kindly Englishmen and Englishwomen whom I have seen bearing with fortitude exile and the trials of climate in lonely places in the tropics, eager for the better welfare of those around them, and beloved by the people in their turn. Such stories as I have quoted are legion. One comes to my mind as I write, of that same famine of 1900. Martin Wood, a young Bombay civilian who has since passed away, was in charge of the district of Jambusar, in Gujerat. The district was smitten so heavily with cholera that the people fell into a panic, and began to fly in terror. To give them confidence, and to save them from wandering about the country-side to die of hunger, Martin Wood had his meals served in the middle of the rough cholera hospital, amid the dead and dying. The expedient was a strange one, but when the people saw he was not afraid they took courage also, and the panic was stayed. Only those who have seen a cholera camp can appreciate fully the nerve of this solitary Englishman, with 80,000 people in his charge. The late R. B. Stewart, Wood's senior officer, did equally brave work, and buried the cholera corpses with his own hands when the "sweepers" had fled.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. Unfortunately there is sometimes ample room for criticism regarding the relations between Anglo-Indians and Indians, in specific cases. I only protest against indiscriminate denunciation, and still more against well-meaning advice from those in high place, couched in such general terms that it conveys a wrong impression to the British public. And when we are distributing sympathy, let us not forget the claims of the men and women who are doing the work of England in these alien lands. I recommend a perusal of the annual speeches made by Ministers in introducing the Indian Budget in recent years, together with the volume of speeches upon India published by Lord Morley. There is a great deal of excellent but somewhat ingenuous advice as to how public servants in India should comport themselves; but of sympathy and encouragement in their task of extraordinary difficulty, hardly a word, save passing references by the Master of Elibank and the late Mr. Buchanan.

There is some difficulty in arriving at a correct estimate of the mortality caused by the famine of 1900. Careful calculations showed that "the toll taken by the famine in British districts was about one million and a quarter lives." Of these, about a quarter of a million were believed to be refugees from native states; and it was further estimated that at least one-fifth of these deaths was due to cholera. The number of those who died in native states will never be accurately known. Sir Thomas Holderness, who had much to do with the control of famine operations in 1897 and 1900, and who did a great amount of work which was not less valuable because it was chiefly conducted from headquarters, has made calculations based on the census returns He points out that in 1891 the native states affected by the famine had a population of 42,000,000, while in 1901 they were found to have a population of only 36,000,000. The decline during the decade was 14½ per cent., whereas in the states not visited by famine the population increased by

over 12 per cent. Sir Thomas Holderness says: "That the famine of 1900 is the chief cause of these very different results can hardly be doubted." At the same time, he observes that it would be unsafe to found on them any close calculation as to the actual excess mortality due to famine; and it may be added that in the states of Western India plague contributed a considerable quota of deaths.

Lord Curzon remarked that to say that the greater part of the people who died in British India had "died of starvation or even destitution, would be an unjustifiable exaggeration." Sir Thomas Holderness confirmed this statement, pointing out that in the Central Provinces, where relief was so liberal that a starving person was unknown, there was nevertheless a considerable excess of mortality from fevers and other diseases, especially in the rainy season of 1900. Sir Antony Macdonnell went into the question very closely, and pointed out that dysentery and diarrhœa are peculiarly famine diseases, directly caused by insufficient or unwholesome food or by reduced powers of digestion and assimilation as the result of continued privation; and further, that at such times the unusual fatality of fevers is owing to the reduced power of the people to resist them, largely due to famine. Mr. Harcourt Butler mentions, among contributory causes, "the extremely unhealthy autumn in 1900, during which malarial fever attacked the rich as well as the poor." Upon the evidence available, I should say that there were probably comparatively few deaths from actual starvation in British India; but I think there must have been many such deaths in native states, where, although considerable help was given, the famine administration was rarely under direct British control. For instance, there was an enormous migration of the people of Western Rajputana with their families and cattle in search of pasture, far in excess of the movement which takes place every year; and it was officially stated that in passing back through Ajmere, "they flooded the poorhouses and hospitals, and

died in numbers along the roads and in the fields." Lord Curzon himself said that the mortality in the native states had in many cases been shocking, but added that "the Government of India cannot be held responsible for a system which it does not control." He acknowledged, however, "the efforts, in many cases most praiseworthy, made by native states to relieve their people."

A small Commission, presided over by Sir Antony Macdonnell, was afterwards appointed to inquire into the results of the famine operations. It came to the conclusion that the relief distributed was excessive, and that the excess was accounted for "by an imperfect enforcement of tests on relief works, by a too ready admission to gratuitous relief, and by a greater readiness on the people's part to accept relief owing to the demoralising influences of the preceding famine." At any rate these were faults on the right side. The Commission made various recommendations for the further revision of the Famine Codes, including the replacement of the minimum wage by payment by task-work for the able-bodied, and the provision of rules for dealing with a fodder famine. The Codes were revised during Lord Curzon's Administration in accordance with these recommendations, and it is probable that to-day the machinery for dealing with famine is almost as perfect as human ingenuity can devise. The Codes were tested with great success by Sir John Hewett in the serious famine in 19 districts of the United Provinces in 1907–8, when 1,400,000 persons were at one time in receipt of relief; and it cannot be doubted that they will prove equal to the strain likely to be imposed by the partial failure of the monsoon of 1911. As an instance of Indian munificence, it should not be forgotten that during the famine of 1900 the Maharajah of Jaipur gave a sum of £140,000, which, with other contributions, has since been formed into an endowment fund for the provision of charitable relief during famine.

INDIA UNDER CURZON AND AFTER

III. IRRIGATION

Intimately associated with the question of famine in India is the problem of irrigation; yet the connection is not so close as is commonly supposed, and often ignorantly alleged, because most of the irrigation works which will serve as a protection against famine have already been made, and the untouched area to which irrigation can be successfully applied is distinctly limited. The irrigation system of India is already by far the largest in the world, and, in particular, is very much greater than that of Egypt. Though irrigation was extensively practised under native rule, it has been enormously developed by the British, who have made nearly all the great works now existing. Yet it is the side of British administration which is least noticed by the visitor; and inquirers who spend weeks in close association with Indian politicians rarely go to see the irrigation areas. The only good book on Indian irrigation was written twenty years ago by Mr. Alfred Deakin, formerly Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth. Though out of date, it is still a fascinating volume, not only by reason of the information it contains about irrigation, but still more for its general observations upon Indian conditions. Mr. Deakin mentions that he was "the first civilian unconnected with the Government who had ever taken the pains to visit the Sirhind Canal, and other important works, which should be the admiration of thousands." He regards the irrigation system as "a monument to the sagacity, ability and magnanimity of British rulers."

Few experiences are more startling or more stimulating than to pass on a hot October morning from the confines of the Indian desert into an irrigated area. The train rattles onward through a region of rolling sandhills, yellow and glaring and desolate. The sandhills are dotted with camel-thorn bushes, and sometimes with clumps of tamarisk scrub,

whose dull pink blossom gives the only alternative touch of colour to the dreary landscape. At rare intervals a few rude huts are passed, and one wonders how the handful of men and women and their few miserable animals find sustenance in that wilderness. The very stations are mere structures of mud, innocent of platforms, and look as though they were dumped down at random in utter aimlessness. Clouds of fine sand whirl about the train, and the dust envelops like a pall. You marvel at the grim determination which could build a railway in such an Arabia Petrea.

Suddenly, and in a flash, the whole world changes before your eyes. You are whirled into the midst of a new country, green and smiling and refreshing. There is no gradual alteration, no previous hint of the coming transformation. The transition is abrupt and instantaneous. The line of demarcation is more clearly marked than a frontier. At one moment, the desert; the next, a lush and fruitful land, with tall crops swaying in the breeze, and gleams of cool water, and prosperous villages with well-fed people and ample flocks and herds, and everywhere right away to the distant horizon, the greenness that betokens bountiful harvests and rich prospective stores of grain. Thus does the irrigation engineer perform miracles in a region of thirst and aridity. The soil is precisely the same as that of the desert you have traversed. Only a few years ago it was desert also, and its single product was camel-thorn bushes. But by using old channels, and cutting new ones, water from hundreds of miles away has been poured into the dry places, and they have become a veritable Promised Land. Water was all they needed; the precious sunlight does the rest; and it does the heart good to see the water streaming along its appointed courses, irrigating the parched soil, making the desert a place of plenty, attracting crowds of prosperous colonists, causing villages to spring up as though by magic.

The benefits conferred by irrigation are so vivid and

obvious that the enthusiasm they arouse almost inevitably becomes too unrestrained. Many irrigation engineers are prone to this pardonable predilection. General Sir Arthur Cotton, the apostle of modern scientific irrigation in India, the constructor of three magnificent systems of deltaic irrigation in Madras, developed in later years an exaggerated belief in the advantages of water-ways. He even urged the entire abandonment of trunk railways in favour of navigable canals, and told a Parliamentary Committee that he believed it would be cheaper to convey goods from Calcutta to Madras by an inland canal than by sea. He wanted the Government to discourage the digging of private wells because the practice might injure his scheme of universal irrigation. Ill-regulated advocacy of this kind was at one time a source of serious embarrassment to the Government of India. A quite uninformed agitation in favour of wholesale irrigation in India reached its height about the time Lord Curzon became Viceroy. Many worthy people honestly believed that if the Government of India would only adopt irrigation on a sufficiently grandiose scale, the problem of famine would be solved for ever; and they cherished the conviction that it was some maleficent but undiscoverable influence in favour of railways which caused the authorities to waste money on steel rails, and incidentally to sacrifice millions of lives which might have been saved. The real cause was, as I have stated, that there are clear limits to the possibilities of irrigation in India, and that in any case irrigation is not such a simple matter as the agitators fancied. It is a highly scientific process, accompanied by many difficulties, chief among which is the danger of water-logging the soil, and thereby producing disease. It has even been argued—I know not with what justification—that irrigation upon lands which have not sufficient natural drainage may after a time produce sterility of soil, by bringing alkaline and other salts to the surface; and it has been suggested that some such cause, and not war, brought

about the abandonment of the vast areas which once were irrigated in Mesopotamia and elsewhere.

Lord Curzon was an enthusiast for irrigation. It was one of his first "twelve subjects." But he was an enthusiast who discriminated. The greatest service that he rendered to the cause of irrigation in India was not so much that he greatly fostered its development, but rather that he restored perspective, reduced the whole problem to its correct proportions, and finally shattered the ridiculous charges with which the Government of India had been assailed. He increased the grant for new irrigation works as soon as he arrived. Very soon afterwards he had careful estimates prepared of the extent of fresh ground in the whole of India which could be brought under cultivation either by new irrigation projects or by extensions of existing systems. With regard to works which might be expected to pay, he found that it was still possible to irrigate another 3½ million acres, at an estimated cost of between 8,000,000 and 9,000,000 sterling. As to works which could not pay, which would be a financial burden on the State, and would in any case do very little for the prevention of famine, only about 300,000 acres more could be undertaken. The total practicable increase to the irrigable area of India under both heads would not, he said, amount to much more than 4,000,000 acres, and he was afraid the works would not secure immunity from drought to districts now liable to famine, or help directly their suffering inhabitants.

In 1901 he appointed a Commission, under the presidency of Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff, to investigate further the whole question of irrigation and its possibilities. The Commission pursued their inquiries during two cold seasons, visited every province where irrigation was possible, and submitted an admirable report in 1903. They increased the rough estimate announced by the Viceroy in 1900 by recommending projects which would irrigate 6,500,000 acres. In his final Budget speech in 1905, Lord Curzon reviewed

the irrigation problem for the last time. His statement was so concise and comprehensive, and revealed so clearly, not only the work undertaken by his Administration, but the whole of the issues connected with irrigation in India, that I may quote it in full. He said:

"As this is the last occasion upon which I shall ever speak at any length upon this subject in India, let me summarise the situation as it now stands. There are two classes of Irrigation in this country, State Irrigation, *i.e.* works constructed or maintained by the State, and Private Irrigation, conducted by communities or individuals, largely by means of wells. I am here only concerned with the former. I need not, before an Indian audience, expatiate upon the distinction, so familiar in our Reports and Budget Statements, between Major and Minor works, Productive and Protective works. Major works are either Productive, in which case we find the money for them out of surplus revenue or from loans, or Protective, in which case we provide for them from the annual Famine Grant of £1,000,000; the distinction between Productive and Protective being that the former are expected to prove remunerative, though they have not always been so, while the latter are not expected to be remunerative at all. In other words, Productive works are, or may be, protective; but Protective works are not expected to be productive. Minor works are those which we undertake entirely out of the revenue of the year.

"Now let me say what our outlay upon all these works up till the present hour has been, and what the property thus created represents. The Government of India have spent in all 46½ crores or 31 millions sterling upon State Irrigation works in all the above classes. With it they have dug nearly 50,000 miles of canals and distributaries, they have irrigated an area of 21½ million acres, out of a total irrigated area in British India of about 47 million acres, and they derive from it a net revenue of £2,700,000 per annum, or a percentage of net revenue on capital outlay of approximately 7 per cent. If we capitalise the net revenue at 25 years' purchase, we obtain a total of 67½ millions sterling, or

considerably more than double the capital outlay. These figures are an indication of what has already been done.

"Next, what are we going to do or what are we capable of doing? In my first year in India I went to see the Chenab Canal in the Punjab, which had been finished a few years earlier. At that time it irrigated 1,000,000 acres, it now irrigates 2,000,000; at that time it had cost 1½ millions sterling, there have now been spent upon it two millions; at that time it supported a population of 200,000 persons, the population is now over 1,000,000, and this huge aggregate is diffused over an expanse, now waving with corn and grain, that but a few years ago was a forsaken waste. Since then we have completed the Jhelum Canal, which already irrigates 300,000 acres, and will irrigate three-quarters of a million. Everywhere these lands, once waste and desolate, are being given out to colonisation; and the Punjab Province, if it lost the doubtful prestige of the frontier with its disturbing problems and its warring tribes, has gained instead the solid asset of a contented and peaceful peasantry that will yearly swell its resources and enhance its importance. Then you have heard of the fresh obligations which we have since undertaken in the same quarter; 5¼ millions sterling have just been sanctioned for the group of canals known as the Upper Chenab, the Upper Jhelum, and the Lower Bari Doab. Before another decade has elapsed 2,000,000 more acres will have been added to the irrigated area, with a proportionate increase in the population, and with an estimated return of 10 per cent. on the capital outlay.

"So much for the near future. Now let me look a little further ahead, and come to the recommendations of the Irrigation Commission. They have advised an additional expenditure of 44 crores or nearly 30 millions sterling, spread out over twenty years, or an annual average expenditure of 1½ millions sterling. We accept that estimate; we regard it as reasonable; and we hope to be able to provide the funds. This will increase the area under irrigation in British India to 6½ million acres as compared with the 4 millions which I mentioned five years ago, the difference being explained by the fact that as we draw towards the close of

this gigantic programme we shall no longer be able to talk glibly of remunerative programmes or of lucrative interest on capital outlay, but shall find ourselves dealing with Protective works, pure and simple, where no return or but little return is to be expected, and where we shall have to measure the financial burden imposed on the State against the degree of protection from scarcity and famine obtained for the people. I do not think that we need shrink from that more exacting test; for we shall have approached, if the metaphor may be permitted, the rocky passes in which our forces will then be engaged, across smiling plains and verdant pastures, in which they will have derived strength and sustenance for the harder and less remunerative toil that will lie before them.

"I wish that we could proceed even faster. But that is out of the question. Canals are not like railways, where companies are ready to find the money and to undertake the work, where an embankment can anywhere be thrown up by unskilled labour, and where the iron or steel plant that may be required can be ordered by telegram from Europe or the United States. In irrigation you have in the first place to find the funds from the borrowings of the State, which are not capable of unlimited extension. You have to spend much time in preliminary investigations and surveys. You then have to obtain your labour for the particular work. It is estimated that to spend the amount which I have named a host of 280,000 workmen and coolies will be required for 250 days in each of the twenty years, in addition to those required for the maintenance of the existing works, and of the new ones as they come into operation. And finally you have to engage and train your skilled establishment, which is a matter of careful recruitment, spread over a series of years. These are the considerations that must always differentiate irrigation work from railway work in India, and that militate against the same rate of speed in the former.

"And then, when we have done all this, where shall we stand? We shall have done much, we shall have done what no other nation or country has done before. But the surplus water from the snows of the Himalayas and from the opened

doors of heaven will still spill its unused and unusable abundance into the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The calculations show that of the total average rainfall ot India as much as 35 per cent., and a much larger proportion of the surface flow, amounting to 87 per cent., is carried away by rivers to the sea. The programme that I have sketched will at the most utilise only 2¼ per cent. of this surface flow, and the remainder will still continue its aimless and unarrested descent to the ocean. Why is this? The answer is very simple, and to any one who has any knowledge of the meteorological or geographical features of this continent very clear. Rain does not always fall in India in the greatest volume where it is most needed. What Cherrapunji could easily spare, Rajputana cannot for all the wealth of Crœsus obtain. Neither does rain fall all through the year in India. It descends in great abundance, within narrowly defined periods of time, and then it is often very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to store it. Providence does not tell us when a year of famine is impending, and we cannot go on holding up the water for a drought that may never come. It would be bad economy even if it were not a physical impossibility. Sometimes where water is most plentiful there is no use for it, because of the sterile or forbidding or unsuitable nature of the soil. Sometimes it flows down in blind superfluity through a country already intersected with canals. Sometimes it meanders in riotous plenty through alluvial plains where storage is impossible. Sometimes, again, the cost of storage is so tremendous as to be absolutely prohibitive. These are some, though by no means all, of the reasons which place an inexpugnable barrier to the realisation of academic dreams.

"Facts of this sort we may deprecate, but cannot ignore; and the time will never come when we can harness all that wealth of misspent and futile power and convert it to the use of man. What we can do the Commission have told us; what we mean to do I have endeavoured imperfectly to sketch out in these remarks. Restricted as is the programme when measured against the prodigious resources of nature, it is yet the maximum programme open to human agency and to finite powers, and it is one that may well appeal

either to the enthusiasm of the individual or to the organised ability of the State. We are about to embark upon it with the consciousness that we are not merely converting the gifts of Providence to the service of man, but that we are labouring to reduce human suffering and in times of calamity to rescue and sustain millions of human lives."

The schemes set forth by Lord Curzon have been steadily continued. By 1909-10 the capital outlay upon irrigation works of all classes had increased to 87¾ millions sterling, with proportionate results. Yet there is no part of his work in India of which his countrymen have heard less. He only carried on, in the department of irrigation, what others had done before him; but the special merit of his labours lay in the fact that he systematised the whole enterprise, prepared a clear and final programme which represented the utmost possible extension of the Indian irrigation system, arranged for its finance and for its steady prosecution, and incidentally silenced the foolish criticism which had been propagated without a check for years.

IX

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

One of the most urgent problems of India is that of the organisation and development of its industries. Agriculture is the mainstay of the country, and must always remain so; but India will not attain its rightful place in the world solely by agriculture. If the ultimate object of Great Britain is to enable India to rely upon her own resources, she must develop Indian industries. If the object of Indian politicians is to make India competent to manage her own affairs, they must turn their attention first to industrial organisation. Crops will never suffice to make India powerful while there is such a huge population to feed. They must be supplemented by manufactures, and by the better utilisation of mineral resources.

The industrial development of India is everywhere proceeding apace. The growth of cotton and jute mills, the great increase of mining, the creation of important subsidiary manufactures, are all working great changes. The stage of transition has produced many difficulties. The old system of village labour is being broken up. That was to some extent inevitable, because Indian industries would never have progressed very far without the adoption of the Western factory system. But is the factory system the only alternative? Can nothing be done to preserve and maintain the vast body of individual workers who are outside the factories? Can the hand-loom compete with the mill? The probability is that there is room for both;

and that under Indian conditions the best solution of the industrial problem lies in a judicious encouragement of both systems. The present trouble is that India has not yet adapted herself to the new situation. The bulk of the population is rooted on the land. If men go to the towns to work as operatives, they return to their villages at the first opportunity. The class of urban industrial workers has still to be created, and the process is slow and painful. A very great responsibility rests upon the Government of India in this respect. They have to profit by the lessons of the past in other countries, and to ensure that the growth of industrialism in India is not attended by the evils visible in England a century ago, and in Japan to-day, It is a responsibility of which they are not now unmindful.

The relations of the British in India to commerce and industry have undergone curious fluctuations. They went to the East for trade and for no other purpose; even conquest was only incidental, and was chiefly undertaken to facilitate trade until Clive fought with a larger aim. The East India Company had the greatest difficulty in discouraging private trade among its agents, and finally was compelled by Parliament to abandon trade altogether. By the middle of last century, an entirely new set of ideals had grown up, and the administrators of India deemed it their duty to discourage business men. The designation "box-wallah" (packman) was still applied as a term of opprobrium to business men even in my time. Lord Lawrence is credited with fierce opposition to the advent of business men in India, but it is not always remembered that he had special reason for his hostility. He became Viceroy during the period of wild speculation which ended in widespread commercial disaster in India towards the close of the American Civil War. On one occasion he exclaimed: "I know what private enterprise means! It means robbing the Government!" The remark became the keynote of the policy of the Indian authorities. The dislike of business

enterprises endured for many years afterwards. Even when the Government of India ceased to be actively hostile, their methods towards business men remained generally sullen, sometimes obstructive, and at times frankly contemptuous. They showed great outward respect to the Chambers of Commerce, but the respect was rarely carried into practice when there was business to be transacted.

Whatever differences of opinion arose in India about Lord Curzon's Administration, he earned nothing but gratitude from the business communities of both races for his commercial policy. He was the first Viceroy to make it thoroughly clear to business men that he meant to help them, and that he regarded them as an integral part of the fabric of the Indian Empire. From his advent dates the complete change in the attitude of the Government of India towards commercial enterprises, which to-day has become so natural that it is accepted as a matter of course. His commercial policy is one of the features of his Administration which has stood the test of time, and has proved to be permanent.

The central achievement of the policy was the creation of a new Department of Commerce and Industry, with a member of the Viceroy's Council at its head. The scheme was evolved from a minor project for the better collection of commercial intelligence. The new Department was charged with the whole control of the commercial and industrial interests of India. The subjects transferred to it from other Departments included various aspects of railway administration, factories, the Post Office and telegraphs, ports and merchant shipping, the Customs, mining, the lighting of the coasts, and many other heads of business. A Director-General of Commercial Intelligence was appointed, and a trade journal was established under his control. The Department was created in March 1905. The first Member for Commerce and Industry was Sir John Hewett, who was selected for his organising capacity rather than for special

commercial knowledge, to which he did not pretend. Since he became Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, some difficulty has been found in filling the appointment, although it carries a salary of over £4000 a year. The original intention unquestionably was that the Commercial Member should when possible be a man of commercial experience, and it is hard to believe that no suitable man can be found in the ranks of business men in India and in England. Yet that is what the authorities aver. Sir John Hewett's successor was Mr. J. F. Finlay, of the Finance Department, who had already retired from India. He resigned in 1908 owing to ill-health. After an interval he was succeeded by Mr. W. L. Harvey, who had strong claims because he had been Secretary of the new Department from its creation, and had long been intimately associated with the business community. On Mr. Harvey's death in 1910 Lord Morley appointed Mr. W. H. Clark, who was a clerk in the British Board of Trade. The selection of Mr. Clark aroused much indignant protest. It was argued with considerable justice that if an official was to be appointed, he should not be a junior official from England. Except for the controversy thus occasioned, the operations of the Department have given much satisfaction to the mercantile community in India.

A prominent feature of Lord Curzon's commercial policy was the energetic attention he paid to the extension of railways. He said at a luncheon given by the Directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company before his departure, that there were 20,841 miles of railway open in India, and 4298 miles in course of construction. He hoped that long before he left India the total railway mileage would have exceeded 25,000 miles. The figures he quoted were apparently not accurate, for when Lord Elgin left India a month later 22,040 miles were open to traffic. But Lord Curzon far outstripped his own expectations, for before he left India 28,150 miles were open, and

3167 more were under construction. The work steadily continues. At the end of the year 1909–10 there were 32,108 miles open for traffic, and 2675 miles under construction or sanctioned. Nevertheless, the total looks small when compared with the 240,000 miles of the United States, though it compares favourably with Canada's 25,000 miles. Any such comparisons are, however, somewhat misleading, by reason of the difference in population and other conditions.

Though Lord Curzon actually built a far greater mileage of railways than any other Viceroy, the statement hardly does justice to his immediate predecessor. Some of these lines were really sanctioned by Lord Elgin, though he was afterwards hampered by financial stringency; and it may come as a surprise to those interested in Indian railway matters to learn that Lord Elgin sanctioned a greater mileage of new railway projects than Lord Curzon. The respective figures are 5484 and 5435 miles. Moreover, Lord Curzon's total was swollen by a large proportion of narrow-gauge lines, whereas Lord Elgin sanctioned far more standard-gauge lines than any Viceroy did before or since. It has further to be remembered that out of the grand total of mileage quoted 3800 miles have been built or are owned by native states. On the other hand, Lord Elgin ended by recommending a curtailment of the rate of railway construction, a recommendation which Lord Curzon speedily induced the Secretary of State to modify.

The financing and management of Indian railways are, however, a source of much greater anxiety than the construction programmes. In the early days of railway construction, companies built under guarantees from the Government, which were found in practice to involve a heavy drain upon Government resources. In the reaction which followed, private enterprise was unduly restricted. When the restrictions were relaxed, the inducements offered to investors were still insufficient, and remained so until

quite recently. In course of time, as the leases of the old guaranteed railways fell in, the lines were acquired by the State, but in most cases leased again to the companies on terms more favourable to the Government. In 1909–10 the State was itself working 6675 miles of railway, while 17,920 miles of State railway were being worked by companies, the remaining mileage falling under other headings. When Lord Curzon arrived the railway property of the Government was not earning enough to meet its interest charges. The year after his arrival—it was a mere coincidence—the railway revenue showed a net surplus for the first time, amounting to £77,000. In the year he left, the annual surplus had risen to £2,105,000. It has since declined, owing to the necessity for further improving existing lines; but in the same period the gross receipts increased by 38 per cent., and there can be no doubt that in their railways the Government of India possess a splendid property, which is rapidly increasing in value.

One of the distinguishing merits of Lord Curzon's railway policy was that while he expedited the construction of new lines, he improved the lines already open. I am aware that it is contended that the improvement of existing lines, and particularly the provision of more rolling stock, has been accelerated since his departure; but the statement only gives some idea of the condition in which he found the old lines. In one year, 1905–6, he budgeted for an expenditure on railways of the enormous sum of £8,500,000, and nearly half this amount was spent on open lines. He increased the rolling stock of the railways of India by 32 per cent. Moreover, he compelled the improvement of accommodation for third-class Indian passengers by his own personal intervention, and the reform was warmly welcomed by the Indian communities.

Lord Elgin had instituted an annual Railway Conference. Lord Curzon altered the character of its deliberations and appointed in addition a small Travelling

Commission, the chief purpose of which was to get into touch with local opinion concerning railway matters. In 1901, at his request, the Secretary of State sent out Mr. Thomas Robertson, a railway expert of great experience, to inquire into and report upon the administration and working of Indian railways. Mr. Robertson spent eighteen months upon the task, and incidentally visited the railways of the United States and Canada for purposes of comparison. The conclusions he came to were that the condition of the railways was far from satisfactory, that "root-and-branch reform" was necessary, and that the lines must be worked "more as commercial enterprises than they have been in the past." I do not propose to examine the highly technical issues raised by Mr. Robertson's admirable report, although I am not wholly unacquainted with them, and although by leaving them undiscussed I practically ignore a subject to which Lord Curzon devoted a vast amount of time. My reason is that this book is mainly intended for general readers rather than for experts. If there may seem some lack of proportion between the space I have devoted to, say, some islands in the Persian Gulf, and to the niceties of railway finance, my renewed answer is that in so vast a theme it has been necessary to be selective, and I have preferred to dwell upon those aspects of Lord Curzon's Administration which seemed to be of most general interest. That is why several features of Lord Curzon's work, of great importance though chiefly technical in character, only find very brief mention in these pages.

The Government of India were rather disconcerted by Mr. Robertson's strictures, but many of his recommendations were carried into effect. Chief among these was a complete revolution in the system of railway control. Hitherto the railway had been a branch of the Public Works Department, and sufficient attention had not been given to the commercial side of railway policy. The Public Works Department had at its head a Member of Council, who

had become rather superfluous. Lord Curzon abolished him, and placed the Department in charge of a Secretary to Government. At the same time he removed the railways from the control of the Department, and handed them over to a new Railway Board, composed of three railway experts, as recommended by Mr. Robertson. He pointed out afterwards that the idea had been propounded by Sir George Chesney many years before. The Railway Board was given control of railway matters, and its duties include the preparation of the annual programme of railway expenditure, the control of State lines, the supervision of companies' lines, and many cognate duties. These changes were only brought into operation in the last year of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. As I have said in the opening chapter, the Railway Board did not meet with general approval at first, chiefly because it paid too much attention to details, and did not concentrate upon the greater questions of railway policy; but it certainly handles railway business far more rapidly than under the old system, and I believe its work is now less open to criticism. The reform thus introduced by Lord Curzon is said to be "the most important that has been made in policy and administration since railways were first introduced into India."

It was followed in 1907 by the abolition of the archaic posts of Consulting Engineers for Railways, and the conferment of larger powers upon the railway companies. In the same year the Railway Board was reconstituted and its powers enlarged, while in 1910 more liberal terms were offered to private promoters of feeder railways. The railway administration of India still has many defects, its methods of finance are not wholly satisfactory, and its rate of progress in construction is far too slow; but there has been a remarkable improvement during the last decade, for which Lord Curzon was largely responsible. My own impression is that the cost of working Indian railways will continue to rise, and that the pay of the subordinate staff will have to be

substantially increased in course of time. On the railways, as in every branch of the public and semi-public services, Indians are demanding a larger share of recognition. Although 97 per cent. of the men employed on the railways are Indians, it is pointed out that very few of them obtain access to the higher posts.

The peculiarity of the Indian railway system is that it is still entirely cut off from the rest of the world, while the sea remains the only highway of communication between India and Burma. The nineteenth century saw the completion of the Siberian Railway; the twentieth century is bound to witness the construction of more great trunk lines throughout Asia. The harbinger of Asiatic progress is the locomotive. The time must certainly come when the Indian system will be linked up with that of China on the one hand, and that of Asiatic Russia and Persia on the other. Lord Curzon's attitude towards these various possibilities can be very briefly explained. One of his objects in making the wild journey from Assam to Upper Burma in 1901 was to judge for himself the character of the country, and the prospects of linking up the Assam and Burma systems. He announced afterwards in Rangoon that though land connection was much to be desired, he would not be a party to it in his time. As to railway connection between Burma and the Chinese province of Yunnan, he thought it "midsummer madness." He said:

"I cannot advise that, in the pursuit of fanciful political ambitions, we should use Indian money to spread-eagle our railways over foreign countries and remote continents, while all the time there is lying the most splendid and lucrative field of investment at our doors."

He added that the entire Burmo-Chinese trade was then being successfully transported across the Salween River in two dug-outs, though it has grown since. His opinions

regarding railway extensions on the western frontier were equally emphatic. Though he built the first section of the Nushki-Seistan Railway, he considered the construction of trunk railways in Persia to be at that time a somewhat remote possibility; and I have always understood that he was absolutely opposed to any project for joining the Indian system to the railways of Russia by an extension through Afghanistan.

I shared these views once, but have now abandoned them all; and I dare say the passing of a decade has materially modified Lord Curzon's opinions also. The early provision of railway communication between India and Burma has become both a strategic and a political necessity. As for linking up with Russia and China, I was induced to come to fresh conclusions after inspecting the Siberian Railway just before the Russo-Japanese War; and these conclusions have been strengthened since I have seen other transcontinental lines, including the Canadian Pacific. The subject is too large to be discussed here, but I hold that when China brings her Szechuan Railway towards the Burma frontier, as she will do in course of time, it should be linked with the Northern Shan States or with Myitkyina; and I understand that the engineering difficulties are not so insuperable as was once supposed. That India will one day have direct railway communication with Europe, and that the railway route will be largely patronised, has become with me an article of faith; but the way to the Straits of Dover will never lie through Persia or Asia Minor. I agree with Sir Thomas Holdich that the route through Afghanistan by way of Kandahar and Herat is "the shortest, simplest, and cheapest overland connection with Europe." He points out that five hundred miles of easy line would connect Europe with India "without any intervening deserts, no hot plains . . . and would pass through an admirable climate and over easy grades." Experience elsewhere shows that such a line would have little through

freight traffic, and would be chiefly maintained by sectional traffic. The project is out of the question while Afghanistan remains surrounded by a ring-fence, but another twenty years will work great changes in the dominions of the Amir. When such a scheme becomes practicable, I see no reason why it should materially affect the problem of Indian defence, and many reasons why it should strengthen the position of Afghanistan as a buffer state. I hope to live to enter the "Calais Express" at the Victoria Terminus at Bombay.

Having set his railway reforms in motion, Lord Curzon turned his attention to the Customs Department, the administration of which had been the subject of constant complaint by the mercantile community. The value of the import trade of India in the year 1905–1906 was over £74,000,000, exclusive of treasure, yet up to that year the Customs arrangements had been unworthy of a tenth-rate colony. It was not the fault of the men, but of the system. The principal Collectors of Customs were selected at random from the Civil Service, and the posts were chiefly used to find temporary employment for officers of fairly senior standing who were waiting for other appointments. As a rule they had no special interest in the work, and knew that they would be speedily transferred to more congenial duties. The Customs branch was a byway which rarely led to high promotion. The consequence was that the commercial firms were constantly being confronted by new temporary collectors who did not know their duties, and were eager to forsake them. The subordinates had other defects, also chiefly due to the system. They had much work, but little real responsibility. Their pay was bad, and their prospects poor. Every maritime province had its own provincial Customs Service administered by the Provincial Government, and in these little services the subordinates had few chances of improving their position. Moreover, procedure was not uniform. Not only was every port a law unto itself, but successive collectors had different methods. Merchants were

therefore exasperated, and Chambers of Commerce grumbled without ceasing.

An inquiry into the condition of the Calcutta Customhouse in 1902 led to some improvement, and at the same time certain concessions were made to subordinates. It was soon plain that these changes did not go deep enough. There were further inquiries, and at last, in 1905, Lord Curzon swept away the provincial services, and established an Imperial Customs Service, whose officers were to be available for employment at any port. A proportion of the higher posts were reserved for members of the Civil Service, but they had first to qualify by acting as assistants, and they were more or less told that if they entered the Customs they were expected to stay in the Department. The grievances of the subordinates were duly rectified. The change revolutionised the Customs Service, and made it worthy of a great Empire with a huge trade. It was deeply appreciated by mercantile firms, and was one of the reforms which led the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, not a very emotional body, to present an address to Lord Curzon on his departure declaring that "the barrier that seemed some years ago to divide Government from commerce has been completely broken down."

On the day he landed in India, Lord Curzon privately expressed his intention of seeking an early opportunity to reduce the telegraphic charges between India and England. In his first Budget speech, he said he regarded the existing rate as "inimical to trade, a barrier to the ever-growing intercourse between India and the mother country, and obsolete and anomalous in itself." The rate for private telegrams was then 4*s.* a word, and for Press telegrams 1*s.* 4*d.* a word. There was a long delay, because negotiations with foreign countries were necessary, but in 1902 he was able to announce that private telegrams had been reduced to 2*s.* 6*d.* a word, and Press messages to one shilling. He admitted that the reduction was not as large "as I should

personally have liked, or as will one day come." The traffic grew so rapidly that by the second year, instead of having to pay £45,000 a year under its guarantee, as was estimated, the Government of India only had to pay £1800. In 1904 private telegrams were further reduced to 2*s*. a word, but no further reduction was made in Press rates until in 1909 the Imperial Press Conference got the rate lowered to 9*d*. The reason why the reduction for private messages gave so much gratification in commercial circles is that much of the business with Europe is transacted by telegraph.

Lord Curzon told the Bombay Chamber, in taking leave of its members, that the rate must go yet lower. He said that if private messages were sixpence a word, and Press messages cheaper still, between England and India, "the almost indescribable ignorance which exists in each country about the other, and which is often the despair of friends of both, could no longer exist." "I believe in giving news to the people," were his final words on a subject on which he had often spoken. As I shall afterwards relate, the Viceroy had recently had personal cause to rue the high cost of Press messages to England, because owing to the process of severe condensation he had accidentally been the victim of a serious misunderstanding. The further reduction of Press telegraphic rates between England and India has become a matter of urgent Imperial importance. For the newspapers in both countries the question necessarily assumes a business form; already they spend all, and sometimes more than, they can afford; but for the public and the Empire cheaper Press telegrams to and from India are now a vital necessity.

Internal private telegrams were also reduced in price during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, with the result that in two years they increased 30 per cent., while a reduction of the internal Press rates caused an increase of between 80 and 90 per cent., the traffic rising in a single year from 7,680,000 to 14,000,000 words. Lord Curzon tried to promote the better dissemination of news from Europe by

introducing, in 1900, a Bill conferring copyright upon Press messages from foreign countries for a limited number of hours. The Bill was eventually withdrawn, partly owing to dissensions among Anglo-Indian newspapers as to the period of copyright, but still more in consequence of the violent opposition of the native Press. The native newspapers were in the habit of promptly republishing the special telegrams from Europe received by the Anglo-Indian newspapers, and were furious at the possibility that the privilege might be denied to them. The Anglo-Indian newspapers did not care a straw about republication in the native Press, with which they were not in competition; they only wanted protection against each other. The difficulty might have been overcome by exempting the native Press from the operations of the Bill, and possibly another measure may be introduced some day upon these lines; but even with that wide exemption it will be difficult to frame a measure acceptable to all. I think that nowadays, in Calcutta at any rate, such a measure might instantly produce severe competition between the Anglo-Indian and the native newspapers.

The reason assigned to me some time afterwards for the withdrawal of the Telegraphic Press Messages Bill was that the Viceroy had been deeply impressed by the loyal attitude of the native Press during the Boer War. He felt the opposition to the Bill to be somewhat unreasonable, but considered that he should not, under the circumstances, persist with a measure to which the leading native newspapers took such strong exception. The recollection of the loyalty of the bulk of the native newspapers during the South African crisis influenced all his views regarding them in later years, and, taken in conjunction with his preoccupations in other directions, goes far to explain why he ignored or condoned subsequent manifestations of sedition in some quarters.

For the benefit of the tea trade, and at the request of the planting community, Lord Curzon passed the Indian

Tea Cess Act in 1903. It provides for a minute compulsory levy on every pound of Indian tea exported by sea, and produces a sum exceeding £20,000 a year. This sum is spent by representatives of the tea trade in advertising, and otherwise pushing the sale of Indian tea in India and other countries. For the indigo planters, who were nearly ruined by German synthetic indigo, he made a special grant spread over a number of years, to defray the cost of scientific inquiry into the methods of production of natural indigo. Though the Behar industry continues to decline, the experiments are still proceeding, not without some hope of success. Meanwhile the indigo planters find some consolation in the thought that the battle is not yet lost, for synthetic indigo can only compete with them by being sold at a fraction above the cost of production. At the instance of the owners of jute mills, special inquiries were instituted into the causes of the deterioration of jute. Efforts were made to improve the sea fisheries, which had been sadly neglected. The petroleum trade was found to be suffering from obsolete restrictions which thwarted its growth, and was given rules which permit greater freedom. An Act passed in 1903 made provision for facilitating and regulating the supply and use of electricity for lighting and other purposes. Except in Calcutta, there was no legislation controlling electric lighting and traction, until this Act was passed.

In his first year in India, Lord Curzon issued revised rules for mining and prospecting; I believe the question had been under consideration before his advent. The extraordinarily obstructive and unjust rules previously in force are scarcely conceivable to-day, but they illustrate very forcibly what I have already said about the former attitude of the Government of India towards private enterprise. One ridiculous rule was that no prospecting licence could be granted to a company or syndicate, although mining enterprises are usually entered upon by associations rather by than individuals. The framers of the original rules seem

to have been inflamed by an almost inexplicable intolerance of companies and syndicates. Again, even a prospector for coal was limited to an area of four square miles, and it was further directed that at least eight miles must intervene between any two prospecting grants to the same person! Prospecting for coal is sometimes an elaborate business, involving heavy initial outlay, and such a rule was almost prohibitive. A disgracefully unjust rule was that "when any area has been explored and its value as a field for mining is sufficiently ascertained," provincial Governments were empowered to refuse to grant prospecting licences, and to put up the whole of the mining rights for sale by auction. It is hardly possible to estimate all the mischief that single enactment did in retarding the development of the mineral resources of India. By its provisions the Government, after permitting an individual to undertake the arduous work of exploration, were enabled to step in, regardless of the preferential claim established by the explorer's industry and enterprise, and sell to any competitor all the mineral wealth he had revealed. A Chinese mandarin of the old school would hardly have been capable of more shameless injustice. A ludicrous regulation was that when premises and mines were abandoned, the workings had to be handed over to the Government "in a workmanlike state." Even an exhausted coal seam had to be delivered up "in a proper state for working," if the rules were insisted on.

The old mining rules were by no means a case apart: they were simply a fair illustration of the normal demeanour of the Government of India towards business men for a period of half a century. The changes made in them by Lord Curzon were the first-fruits of the new policy by which he instilled confidence into every branch of commercial life. All the regulations I have quoted were ruthlessly destroyed; royalties on precious stones and gold and silver were based on net profits instead of on output, and thus an iniquitous provision which had cost the Burma

Ruby Mines Company £150,000 while it was working at a loss was abolished; the royalty on coal was reduced from *2d.* to a *1d.* per ton; an absurd prohibition controlling the assignment of interests was excised from the rules, and in many other ways the whole of the conditions were revised.

The reform gave a great impetus to mining enterprise in India. Sir Thomas Holland, in a lecture to the Royal Society of Arts in April 1911, pointed out that the year 1899 was memorable, in regard to mineral questions, in two ways. In that year not only were the new mining rules promulgated, but a gold standard of currency with a fixed rate of exchange was adopted. English investors knew for the first time the exact nominal value of their outlay and the worth of their dividends; and they ought to have known that the old policy of obstruction was abandoned for ever. Yet so evil was the name of the Government of India in the English money market that it was years before mistrust was allayed, and I have little doubt that even to-day the memory of the second half of the nineteenth century militates against the popularity of Indian investments. Certain flaws in the new rules are now being rectified; but after ten years' working Sir Thomas Holland was able to testify to "the generous nature of the rules as a whole."

Lord Curzon afterwards tried, without success, to induce prominent English capitalists to start great iron and steel works in India; and possibly no one was more surprised than the Viceroy when a courageous and prescient Indian, the late Mr. Jamsetjee Tata, volunteered to undertake the task. In some respects Mr. Tata was the most remarkable Indian of his time. In the last few decades, India has produced a few leaders of thought, a few earnest reformers, one or two orators of marked ability, two or three undoubted statesmen, and a writer or two of notable talent; but there has been hardly any other man among its millions who may more fitly be said to have united within himself the qualities of which the Indian peoples stand so greatly in need. His

achievements were mainly material and of a nature to impress the Western mind rather than the Oriental; but I knew him well in his later years, and caught glimpses of the high purpose which lay behind them. As a pioneer of Indian industry he stood entirely alone, and so far he has had no conspicuous successor. No record of the period during which Lord Curzon governed India can ignore his work.

Jamsetjee Tata saw in his early youth that India must add industrial development and the utilisation of its natural resources to its immemorial adherence to the soil. His articles of faith were that the country could not exist almost solely upon agriculture, that it had vast unutilised resources, that with its abundance of raw material and cheap labour it might develop great manufactures, and that Indian brains and Indian capital, wisely associated, where necessary, with Western experience, ought to do the work. He differed from the majority of his compatriots in the extraordinary thoroughness of his procedure. When, for instance, he decided to enter the mill industry, he first made a long and careful study of Lancashire methods. He emerged from his researches an expert of a high order; his brain had a peculiar bent for the investigation of machinery and of systems of manufacture; and the splendid Empress Mills at Nagpore, which he built on his return, are the finest of their kind in India. In every enterprise that he subsequently touched he showed the same faculties: first, broad imagination and keen insight, next a scientific and calculating study of the project and all that it involved, and finally a high capacity for organisation.

The important share he took in the reconstruction movement which has given Bombay so many handsome buildings was only one of his many enterprises. Had he lived, he would undoubtedly have created a great and healthy suburb of Bombay on the Trombay heights; he dreamed of it for years, and had a firm belief in its success. I once wrote an article in which I said that the man who built an hotel

worthy of such a city would do more for Bombay than the donor of many museums. He came to me and told me that the idea had long been simmering in his mind, and that he had made much study of the subject. He spent more than a quarter of a million sterling upon the project: and the immense Taj Mahal Hotel, with its great dome, the first sight that greets travellers upon entering the harbour, was the result. He had not the slightest desire to own an hotel, however imposing; his sole wish was to attract people to India, and incidentally to improve Bombay. In the midst of incessant activities, and in spite of the claims of his widespread mercantile business, he found time to conduct innumerable experiments, all at his own cost. He introduced the Japanese silk industry into Mysore. He sent many Indian students to England and Japan. He tried to acclimatise Egyptian cotton in India, to send Bombay mangoes to the London market, to develop artesian wells in Gujerat; no one but himself and one or two others knew the whole range of his interests. The mistakes he undoubtedly made—they were not many—were due to the practical impossibility of exercising close control in so many directions; and he was very self-willed.

One of his most marked characteristics was his passion for travel. He knew England better than most Englishmen, and there were few countries wherein he had not journeyed, with seeing eye and a mind ready to grasp what he saw. He was familiar with many great cities, knew Paris well, and was not unknown in New York, where he had a branch house. With him, wealth was but a means to an end; he cared little for it, save for the power it gave him. Simplicity was his invariable rule; he liked splendid surroundings, but his personal tastes were of the plainest kind, and he scorned publicity. His greatest pleasure was to be among his own friends at his club; and any stranger who saw his strong impressive bearded form in moments of relaxation, clad in the simple white garb of

his race, and laughing over a game of *pachesi*, would not have dreamed that he was in the presence of one who had such a wide knowledge of the world, who had done so much, and had cherished such high aims. He was a Parsi, and his interests centred in Bombay, but his spirit rose above the restraints of race and creed. He belonged to the whole country, and did more for its material regeneration than any other Indian of modern times.

In his later years, the boldness of Mr. Tata's projects staggered and sometimes frightened his contemporaries, but his wisdom is rapidly receiving posthumous justification. He died at Nauheim in 1904. The three great schemes with which his name is chiefly associated were all set in motion during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. The first was for the foundation of an Indian Institute of Science, an organisation which should provide new careers for the promising youth of India, should bring the best intellects of the country into closer touch with Western science, and should at the same time help forward the development of the resources of the Indian Empire. To that end he offered property worth £200,000—it has since increased in value—as an endowment, the property to be vested in the Government. A deputation headed by Sir Edward Candy laid the scheme before Lord Curzon on the day after his arrival, and he promised his warm support. Later the Viceroy gave a grant of £5800 a year towards the enterprise, and also granted £16,600 towards the building fund. Mr. Tata died just when his scheme had been fully approved by Lord Curzon and the Secretary of State, but his sons immediately announced to the Government of India their intention of fulfilling their father's wishes. Sir William Ramsay had already visited India to advise upon the scheme; the Mysore Government gave £33,000 down, a large tract of land for a site, and promised £3300 a year; and the Institute is now established at Bangalore as a post-graduate university institution for "the promotion of advanced studies and

original research with special regard to the interests of India." Its immediate object is study and research "in such branches of pure and applied science as are more directly applicable to Indian arts and industries." Dr. Morris Travers, F.R.S., from Bristol University, is the first director, having been nominated by the Royal Society at the request of the Secretary of State. One of Mr. Tata's express injunctions, which showed his modest character, was that his name was not to be associated with the designation of the Institute.

The second scheme could only have been carried out by a man of bold and original ideas. Mr. Tata was long possessed by the thought that the heavy tropical rainfall of Western India might be utilised for practical purposes. Behind the narrow strip of coast the Western Ghats rise like a natural rampart, and they catch the first onset of the south-west monsoon. The average rainfall in the Lonauli district is 175 inches. Mr. Tata met Mr. David Gostling, who had hit upon the plan of constructing huge storage reservoirs amid the hills, and arresting the rapid flow of water to the sea. The water thus accumulated could, he contended, be converted into enough electric power to supply all the mills in Bombay. Both were laughed at, but Mr. Tata pursued the idea with characteristic tenacity of purpose. The preliminary investigations lasted for years, but it was conclusively demonstrated that the thing could be done; and it is being done. On February 8, 1911, Sir George Clarke laid the foundation-stone of the extensive works now being constructed at Lonauli, and they will probably be completed in 1913. Whole valleys are being dammed to hold up the water. The dams will be 8700 feet in length, and 32 to 70 feet high, creating lakes 2521 acres in extent, of a capacity of 3000 million cubic feet, with a fall of 1730 feet. The power produced will be transmitted to the City of Bombay, a distance of 43 miles, and will be consumed by the cotton mills. The first estimate is for 30,000 electric horse-power,

but this will ultimately be much exceeded. The initial capital is a million and a quarter sterling, and the money was entirely subscribed by Indians, among whom were several princes, who contributed two-thirds of the whole capital.

The third scheme was that of the iron and steel industry I have already mentioned, and it was the project of Mr. Tata's with which Lord Curzon had most to do. The hydro-electric scheme chiefly rested with the Bombay Government. The inspiration in the third case came from Mr. Tata, who for some years had experts at work investigating the various iron-ore deposits in the Central Provinces and elsewhere; but he died while the inquiries were in progress, and it was his sons, forming the firm of Tata, Sons and Co., who, as in the case of the hydro-electric project, framed and submitted the scheme which was ultimately accepted by Lord Curzon's Government. A hill of rich hematite iron was found in the native state of Mourbhanj, in the Orissa district of Bengal, as well as another in the Central Provinces. Coal and coke were obtainable from the Jherria coalfield, 130 miles away. Flux was furnished by deposits of dolomite and limestone near at hand. The great market and port of Calcutta was distant only 153 miles. A site for the iron and steel works was selected near the main line of the Bengal-Nagpur railway. Thus the difficulties which have so often prevented the development of iron and steel works in India were at last overcome. All the requisite materials could be assembled at no great cost, and the works could be constructed within easy reach of a port.

Lord Curzon, on the advice of Sir John Hewett, then at the head of the Commerce and Industry Department, gave the scheme generous encouragement. He agreed to build a railway 45 miles long from the hill of iron to the proposed works; to procure a reduction of railway freight charges on materials required for construction, on raw material, and on finished products sent for shipment to Calcutta, and to buy

a large quantity of steel rails of prescribed quality every year instead of purchasing abroad, provided the price was the same.

Stimulated by this assistance, the Tata brothers placed their scheme upon the market, and in 1907 floated a company which now has control of a capital of about £2,000,000, largely found by Indians. The whole of the preparations are practically complete. A new station has been made at Kalimati, on the main line. A railway has been built to the works at Sakchi, rather less than three miles away. Another line leads to Gurumaishimi, the hill of iron in the jungle, where 200,000 tons of very rich ore were long ago ready to be moved to the works. The company has eleven miles of railway in and around its sheds at Sakchi alone. About 2500 men are being employed, of whom about 200 are Europeans imported for the steel-making processes. The industry will be run as far as possible with labour-saving machinery, and great care is being taken to organise the workmen on an efficient basis. The works can manufacture 120,000 tons of pig-iron annually. Pig-iron will be made before the end of the year; steel early in 1912; and the contract for 20,000 tons of steel rails annually for the Government of India is only one branch of the undertaking. Sir Thomas Holland has stated that the company has in sight all the ore it will require for many years to come, and that possibly the raw material may also be exported to Europe when rich ores are in demand. The whole enterprise marks the dawn of a new era in Indian industrial development, and it is entirely the work of Indians, acting in conjunction with skilled European advice.

I have already alluded to the supreme importance of guarding against the growth in India of those evils of industrialism which once were a blot upon England, and are still very visible in all Western countries. If we are to have factories and mines in India, let us at least try to make them a source of benefit and not of human misery. Indian employers of labour of the new school have not yet realised,

as a class, that they owe a duty to their workpeople as well as to themselves. They are eager for profits, and sometimes do not care at what cost in human suffering their profits are obtained. There are happily many honourable exceptions, but the majority of Indian employers of industrial labour are indifferent to the welfare of their people. Dr. T. M. Nair, a Madras Hindu, who was a member of the Factory Commission of 1907–8, wrote at the end of his investigations:

"I must confess . . . with shame that in my tour throughout India I found that my countrymen as a class were more unsympathetic and hard employers of labour than the European manufacturers. Of course there were many notable exceptions. But, speaking generally, the labourers fared worse under Indian employers than under European. Even some of the most enlightened and educated Indian gentlemen, with whom I discussed industrial questions, had not a single word of sympathy with the labourers to express. They were all anxious to make up for lost time, and to push on their industrial ventures and to accumulate wealth. But as for the workers, they were part of the machinery of production and nothing more."

When Lord Curzon became Viceroy he found under consideration a Bill for the regulation and due inspection of mines. Up to that time Indian mines had never been properly inspected, and accidents were not reported. The Government of India had woven a wonderful web in which to enmesh mining prospectors; they had done nothing for the protection of people who worked in mines already existing. The Bill remained under consideration for another two years, during which time it met with strong opposition from many mine-owners. It was to a great extent reconstructed before being finally passed in 1901. It regulated the employment of women and children, gave powers to draft rules for the safety and health of people working in mines, provided for proper inspection, and constituted Mining Boards, on which the mine-owners were represented, to which all rules were

to be referred. By Lord Curzon's direction, a Department of Mines, with a Chief Inspector and assistants, was also organised. How urgent was the need for these measures was revealed by the Viceroy in the course of his speech on the passing of the Mines Act, when he said:

"I . . . sent and asked Mr. Reader, the Officiating Inspector, for a special report. . . . What he told me was that, in his many inspections, he had repeatedly found an utter disregard for human life, resulting partly from ignorance, and partly from carelessness, and that many mines were conducted upon such inhuman lines—these were his own words—that some immediate remedial action ought to be taken. . . . In many of the mines the head gear and winding apparatus were unsafe. Elsewhere there was no attempt at proper ventilation. Frequently the managers were absent, and the work was proceeding under no sort of control. . . . In one case, in a Bengal coal-mine, Mr. Reader found two hundred and fifty people (men, women, children, and infants) at work, where he reported the ventilation as nil, the air as foul in the extreme with smoke and gases, and the conditions as unfit for human existence. . . . In two other gaseous mines, where the managers were absent, and incompetent substitutes had been left in charge, he found huge fires kindled in the working galleries, and naked lights suspended from the roof where the cutting was going on. . . . Again, he says that infants are allowed to be carried and put to sleep in foul places incompatible with health or safety."

The context, which I have omitted, indicates that the conditions described were by no means general, and that in many mines precautions were taken, and the health and safety of the workpeople cared for; but the passages quoted show that mining legislation had become imperative. It should also be said that the offending mine-owners were certainly not all Indians.

It was unfortunate that Lord Curzon was never able to undertake similar measures for the benefit of the factory workers of India, who in his day had already reached the

large total of 682,000. He was not unmindful of their defective conditions of labour, and drew attention to the need for remedial measures. Had it not been for his premature departure, he would certainly have dealt with the whole question. The issue raised by the oppressive conditions under which many mill operatives were working in India became acute in the last year of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. It was handled on broad and comprehensive lines by Lord Minto, and its final settlement represents the first important result of Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty. The passing of the Indian Factories Act of 1911, and the institution of a legal twelve-hours day for textile workers in India, was to a considerable extent due to my own intervention. I have refrained throughout this volume from alluding to any occasional participation on my part, or on the part of the journal with which I was connected, in any of the events or movements narrated; but I am moved to be less reluctant in this one instance, for reasons which I will afterwards explain.

At the beginning of 1905 the system of factory inspection in India had partly broken down. There was a Factory Act, but in certain respects it had become almost a dead letter. The Government were meticulous in insisting upon the fencing of machinery, but seemed to think that their responsibility ended at that point. In the City of Bombay there were 79 cotton mills, employing a daily average of 114,000 people; yet every officer associated with the inspection of the Bombay factories had many other things to do. The "Chief Inspector of Factories" was the Assistant Collector, usually a young civil servant. In 1905 this post was held by six different men, all inexperienced, and generally indisposed to regard factory inspection as a serious part of their manifold duties. The single whole-time factory inspector was chiefly employed in checking produce under the Cotton Excise Act, for the Government carefully looked after their dues. The surgeons who were supposed to certify the ages of children employed in factories

could give very little time to the work, which was perfunctorily done. The officer upon whom devolved the important task of inspecting the sanitary condition of the mills, their water-supply and ventilation, and above all, the observance of the laws about children, was a functionary styled "the Personal Assistant to the Surgeon-General." He was a sort of private secretary, whose principal task was to keep the medical stores of the province; and the idea that, in addition to his normal duties, he could inspect 79 huge cotton mills, and many other factories, spread over an area of several square miles, was ludicrous. It was only natural that under such a system the provisions of the Factory Act were systematically evaded. In Calcutta the failure of factory inspection, and the evils which followed in its train, were even more apparent. One Calcutta mill manager frankly admitted to the second Factory Labour Commission that he had taken no notice of the Factory Act. Another manager elsewhere, whose mill employed nearly 400 children, actually affirmed that he had never heard of a Factory Act imposing restrictions on child labour; and I can quite believe it.

The scandals of factory labour in India, and the neglect of the Government to exercise proper supervision, were disclosed in a rather curious way. For many years the Indian mills were only worked from sunrise to sunset, and in the tropics, where there is no long twilight, and darkness comes early, the hours represented no abnormal hardship. At length it occurred to some enterprising individual in Bombay that if he installed electric light in his mill he might run his machinery a little longer. He did so, with such results that by 1905 there were 39 mills lit by electricity in the City of Bombay alone. The Bombay mill industry is based upon unsatisfactory principles. Most of the mills are managed by firms which act as "agents," and the agents are remunerated, not upon profits, but by commission upon out-turn. They receive a small sum upon every pound of

yarn they make, and production is thereby stimulated without regard to the state of the market. In 1905 there was a "boom" in the mill industry. The mills were pouring out their products, and great profits were being made. The value of mill shares rose in sympathy. Mill managers in the happy possession of the electric light continually extended their hours of labour; mills without electricity clamoured for installations. Very soon there were sixteen mills working from at least 5 A.M. to 8 P.M., and some of these even continued until 8.35 P.M. or longer. Allowing for the statutory half-hour stoppage in the middle of the day, the operatives had to do from 14½ to 15 hours of actual labour, and I believe there were even worse cases. The other mills possessing electric light were working from 13 to 14 hours. The operatives never saw their homes in daylight. They were the victims of the masters, and, as I satisfied myself, the unwilling victims. It must be remembered that they were working in fierce tropical heat, in a badly drained district full of mephitic exhalations, within mills some of which were old and dimly lighted, where windows were never opened and the foul air was stifling; but I will refrain from details.

The competition grew so intense that there seemed no limit to the hours likely to be worked. Early in August the Bombay mill-owners held their annual meeting. Sir Henry Procter, who is connected with the mill industry, but had not increased the hours of work in his mills, reproached the offending mill-owners, saying: "To swell your profits you are ready to sink all feelings of humanity, and to sweat your mill hands to any extent." It was not, he said, a question of competition with Lancashire, but "a question of increasing profits, which are already anything between 20 per cent. and 50 per cent." Mr. Bomanjee Dinshaw Petit used even stronger language, and declared that there were 32 mills working 15 hours a day, a statement which may have been correct then, though I could not verify it at a later date. Both urged the adoption of a twelve-

hours day, and a resolution in favour of such a restriction was passed. Not a single one of the offenders acted upon it, and some of them told me afterwards that they thought it a "formal thing." There was no infraction of the law in keeping the mills at work day and night. The hours of adult male labour were not regulated, and such enactments as existed only applied to the hours of women and children.

A week or two afterwards I intervened. My original intention was to visit one or two mills late at night to notice the condition of the operatives as they ceased work. Almost immediately I discovered that in addition to the undue exploitation of adult labour, there were shameful abuses of child labour about which nobody had said a word. I believe the majority of the mill-owners concerned were unaware of the conditions under which children were working; but their ignorance did not lessen their responsibility. These discoveries were quite unexpected, and I determined to probe further. Before the mill-owners were aware of my proceedings, I had, in the company of an expert, inspected many of their mills at all hours from before dawn until long after dark, held informal meetings of the operatives, visited the people in their wretched homes, looked at good mills as well as bad ones, and collected abundant evidence both as to general conditions and as to the conditions of child labour. What I saw was far worse than I had been led to expect; but I will not describe it afresh, nor will I pause to tell in detail of the number of stunted infants under the legal age for employment, of the worn and haggard children compelled to masquerade as adults on false certificates, and of the utter disregard of the law limiting the hours in which children could work.

I wrote a page for *The Times of India* describing the results of my inquiries. I did not seek to emulate Charles Kingsley and Tom Hood; it was a plain statement of facts. The *Manchester Guardian*, which reprinted my article, said that it was "a terrible indictment"; but if that was the

case, it was the facts which made it so. I called upon the mill-owners to stop their long hours; urged the Government to enforce their neglected laws; and pointed out that the only way to remedy the gross oppression of textile workers in India was to pass an Act limiting the hours of adult male labour in factories. The efforts at voluntary agreement had failed. I advocated a legal twelve-hours day. It may sound a mockery, to Australians in particular, but it was all that could be hoped for in India.

Not a mill-owner budged. The Bombay Government were in the hills, there was not a single responsible official of high rank in Bombay, the Viceroy had just resigned. Nothing was done until my articles reached England, when the *Manchester Guardian* and other newspapers took the matter up, and telegrams began to arrive. Meanwhile the native Press, without an exception, had warmly supported the cause of the operatives, and fully endorsed my statements; it was one of those occasions the recollection of which makes one slow to criticise native newspapers. The Bombay Presidency Association appointed a committee, presided over by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, to inquire into the question, though I do not think it ever met. I continued my crusade. A day or two later Sir Sassoon David, the Chairman of the Mill-owners' Association, informed me that, as an example, he would give up the use of electric light in his mills. Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim simultaneously sent a notification that he would introduce a twelve-hours day at once, and Sir Jacob Sassoon, who employed 12,000 hands, did the same. They were all humane employers, and it was not against them that I had been agitating, though throughout I mentioned no names. Other mill-owners followed suit, but many still refused.

A new complication arose. The mill operatives began to demonstrate at night against the mills which continued working excessive hours. Windows were smashed and property destroyed, and there was a certain amount of mild

rioting. The police authorities were anxious, and so was I. In previous years I had seen more than one riot in Bombay, and the riots of 1908 afterwards showed what the city is capable of when it gets out of hand. My position was embarrassing. The European community were mostly unsympathetic, because many held mill shares, which had temporarily declined in value owing to my agitation. The native Press was generous in its support, but most Indian owners of mill shares were wrathful. To add to the difficulties, the Prince and Princess of Wales were even then passing down the Red Sea on their way to Bombay. The attitude of the police was summed up in the statement: "If you don't drop it there may be grave disorders just when the Prince and the Viceroy are arriving, and you will be blamed by the Government and everybody." I refused to desist, but it was plain that the recalcitrant mill-owners had to be firmly dealt with by somebody. Had there been a single representative of the Bombay Government at hand official influence might have been brought to bear; but as happens during the greater part of the year, the city, with its million inhabitants, had been left to take care of itself. There was only one alternative remaining. Next day I became my own Lloyd George, and though very few of the mill-owners knew it, the resolution which all were forced to accept, agreeing temporarily to a twelve-hours day, was drafted by me. The electric lights were turned out, and from that time the victory was won.

The remainder of the story must be told in a few words. The resolution I had drafted declared at its close that the Mill-owners' Association, "while adhering to its opinion that shorter hours are desirable, cannot bind itself permanently to adopt any limitation which is confined to Bombay only." It was meant to compel the Government to take general legislative action. A decline of trade, and the pressure of public opinion, alike prevented any reversion to the former long hours But the question was not allowed to lapse. Lord

Morley appointed a Committee, with Sir Hamilton Freer-Smith as President, to investigate factory conditions in India, and this was followed by a larger Factory Commission. My statements regarding Bombay were amply confirmed by the reports of both Commissions, which further showed that in some other parts of India there were even worse abuses in factories. The ultimate result was that in March 1911 the Government of India passed an Act restricting adult male operatives in textile factories (and in other factories when considered necessary) to a twelve-hours day, amending and strengthening the law in regard to the employment of women and children, and providing an efficient system of factory inspection. The Act introduces a new principle into the Indian industrial system, and marks a great advance in Indian industrial legislation. It is due to the Bombay mill-owners to say that they were never reluctant, even at the outset, to accept a legal twelve-hours day; but they objected to restricting their mills to twelve hours while their competitors in other provinces remained unfettered. The objection was somewhat academic, because very few cotton mills outside Bombay had the electric light.

I have ventured to state at some length my share in the earlier stages of this movement for two reasons. The first is that Anglo-Indian newspapers are constantly charged with fomenting race-hatred and with indifference to the interests of the Indian people. No one brings this accusation more frequently or more recklessly than the members of the English Labour Party. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald states in his book that he "never saw a really sympathetic article on Indian affairs" in *The Times of India;* I can only say that he must have read it very rarely, for I believe its policy remains unaltered. Except that they sent two members to join in the original deputation to Lord Morley, the English Labour Party did nothing at all to help the movement for the emancipation of the mill operatives of India. Two or three members of the party visited India

while the Bill was under consideration; they wrote a great deal about land revenue and the partition of Bengal, but not a word about the conditions of industrial labour and the measure introduced to ameliorate it. When the Bill was nearly wrecked, through the pliancy of the Commerce Member, Mr. Clark, as happened at one stage, they made no effort to save it. The English Labour Party is accused of being out of touch with the workers in England; if India's experience of their representatives is any criterion, the accusation is not a matter for surprise. This was a Bill which gave a new charter to the operatives of India; it saved the children employed in Indian factories from shameful exploitation: it embodied (in a still indequate form) a great principle of vital importance to the whole future of organised Indian industrialism; and it was introduced almost solely in consequence of the agitation conducted by an Anglo-Indian newspaper. I believe that some such Bill must at some future time have been passed by the Government in any case; that it came when it did was due to *The Times of India*. The policy of the paper at that juncture was not new, but carried on a continuous tradition. My predecessor in the editorial chair, Mr. T. J. Bennett, was presented on his departure with an address from thousands of the agriculturists of Gujerat for the persistency with which he had advocated their grievances.

My other reason for dwelling on this episode is that I wished to illustrate the situations which sometimes arise in the great cities of India as a result of the wholesale migrations of the provincial Governments to the hills. One prominent member of the Bombay Government might have quelled the menace of disorder which was suddenly revealed; but in the whole city there was no one able to exercise sufficient influence upon the mill-owners, and though the police did their best, they were powerless. On another occasion, in a moment of serious emergency, I found that in the vast Bombay Secretariat the senior representative of the

Bombay Government, the sole embodiment of high executive authority, was an elderly Parsi clerk in red satin trousers. The entire higher organisation of the Government, down to the last junior Under-Secretary, was in the hills, a day's journey away. This is a subject to which I shall revert later; and meanwhile I will only say that we cannot expect to continue to control India upon the principles of St. Moritz.

My apology for this personal divagation is that it has some direct concern both with Indian industry and with the affairs of India during and after Lord Curzon's Administration; and I have preferred in this chapter to dwell upon the events of the period rather than to enter upon a discussion of general principles. One other point must be noted. Lord Curzon never failed to acknowledge that the success of his commercial, financial, and industrial policy was largely due to the work of his predecessors. He claimed at the end of his Administration that there had been an enormous improvement, that there was everywhere more money in the country, in circulation, in reserves, in investments, in deposits, and in the pockets of the people; that the wages of labour had risen, that the standards of living among the poorest had gone up, that they employed conveniences and even luxuries which a quarter of a century ago were undreamed of, thereby indicating an all-round increase of purchasing power; and that wherever taxation could be held to pinch, his Government had reduced it. But he added: "The whole point of my argument is that the improvement dates from the closing of the Mints by Lord Lansdowne and Sir David Barbour; and though it is in my time that the fruits have been mainly reaped, the seeds were sown by them."

X

FISCAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

The word "fiscal" serves to include a brief reference to Lord Curzon's financial policy, as well as some consideration of the Indian tariff problem. The next important question which will arise for settlement in India will undoubtedly be the request of the Indian people that the Indian tariff shall be settled and maintained in greater accordance with their wishes. No suggestion of disloyalty will be involved; nor will the request imply any hostility to British rule, unless it is blindly refused, in which event it may produce a graver form of hostility than any yet encountered. It will be a perfectly constitutional demand, preferred in a constitutional manner; and it will raise a moral issue transcending in magnitude any yet presented to Great Britain by India. We invite the whole world to witness that we are in India for the benefit of the Indian people and not for our own. Are we sure that in all respects we are justifying the boast? We have recently enlarged the liberties of India. Are we sure that we are willing to listen to her voice now that it is more audible?

This is the one issue on which, I believe, practically the whole of India is united. All the communities, Hindus and Mahomedans, Loyalists and Anarchists, Congress and Moslem League, the bulk of the silent civil servants, most of the non-official Europeans, take the view that the Indian tariff must be settled in the interests of India; and they believe that at present the interests of England are

considered first. The belief may not be entirely well founded, but we have given ample cause for its existence. Imperial Preference does not enter into the matter, though it may come later; at present the question is that of India's right to a hearing in the settlement of her own tariff. Though not yet acute, the issue may soon become so, and there seems every possibility that a very curious position will then be produced. On the one hand will be ranged most of the non-official members of the new Imperial Council; on the other will be the Secretary of State and Parliament; and between them will stand the official members of the Council, nearly all of them sympathising with the demand of the Indian people, but all directed to vote according to the dictates of the India Office.

Such a situation cannot long continue. The Secretary of State will be compelled either to give greater freedom to the Government of India in tariff matters, or to mould afresh the spirit in which Indian tariff questions are approached at Whitehall. Whichever course he pursues, he is likely to have an uncomfortable time in Parliament; while if he refuses to move at all, the consequences in India may be serious. Let it be noted that the key to the position is the attitude of the Government of India and their representatives in the Imperial Council. They are the real trustees of the British control in India. In them lies our safeguard, and on them we must depend. They will never consent, for instance, to any measure which would grievously impair the efficiency of the defences of India; but in an issue such as this, in which most of them agree with the people of India, what is the Secretary of State to do? I will not dwell upon the point, but it must be obvious that the tariff question in India cannot for ever remain in its present position.

Lord Curzon found that one tariff problem of considerable importance was awaiting decision when he arrived. Bounty-fed beet sugar had been driven from the United

States by heavy countervailing duties in 1897. The beet-growers had found a fresh market in India. The Indian sugar crop occupied an important place in the agricultural industries of the country. It had been valued at £20,000,000, and was estimated to employ two million people; but within recent years the area under sugar had declined by 13 per cent., and many refineries had been closed. Other causes, including famine, had partly contributed to bring about this result; but there could be no doubt that imports of bounty-fed sugar were at that time chiefly responsible. With the consent of the Secretary of State, an Act was passed on March 20, 1899, conferring on the Government of India power to impose countervailing duties on imported sugar, where necessary, up to the full extent of the State bounties. On that occasion the Viceroy said:

"Bounties are in themselves an arbitrary, and in my opinion a vicious, economic expedient designed in exclusively selfish interests. They are inconsistent with Free Trade, because they extinguish freedom, and they reverse the natural currents of trade. To meet them by a countervailing duty is to redress the balance and to restore the conditions under which trade resumes its freedom. I do not think that we need pay much attention, therefore, to the mutterings of the high priests at Free Trade shrines. Their oracles do not stand precisely at their original premium. This is not a question of economic orthodoxy or heterodoxy; it is a question of re-establishing a fiscal balance which has been deflected for their own advantage and to our injury by certain of our foreign competitors."

I quote this passage, not because there is any special importance in the denunciation of bounties, about which most people are agreed, but rather because it contains hints which suggest a certain consistency of view upon the Free Trade question, with which Lord Curzon has not always been credited to the extent to which he is entitled. The

new Act did not have the expected effect, for imports of bounty-fed sugar continued to increase. The explanation was disclosed at the Brussels Convention in 1901, when it was found that a new system of indirect bounties had been devised, by which German and Austrian producers were still able artificially to force their way into the Indian market. Fresh legislation was accordingly introduced by the Government of India to deal with the altered conditions, and it met with success; but it did not materially ameliorate the condition of the Indian sugar industry.

When the second Act was passed, Lord Curzon said to the sugar growers and refiners: "We are giving you a fresh lease of life now. Prove yourselves deserving of the favour. Reform your methods, modernise your machinery, improve the manufactured article." But though the bounties were foiled, the indigenous industry remained stagnant. Cane sugar poured in from Mauritius and Java. The produce of a British colony was not unwelcome, but the enormous growth of the Java imports suggests reflections. Mr. Nöel-Paton reported that in 1910–11 over 91 per cent. of Indian imports of sugar came from Java; and the Java planters dominated the market by scientific cultivation and organised trading. The *Pioneer* stated that in that year India bought over £8,000,000 worth of foreign sugar, much of which might have been grown in the country. Even Austrian beet sugar still finds a respectable place in the imports in some years. India is in the remarkable position of being at once the largest grower and largest importer of sugar of any country in the world. Steps are being taken to improve Indian methods of production, but a far more elaborate and scientific organisation of the whole industry is required. The Government were asked in the Imperial Council in March 1911 to inquire further into the matter, and gave a reply which seemed unnecessarily discouraging. Dr. Royle has stated that India could produce enough cane to swamp the world's market.

There were afterwards during Lord Curzon's Administration other cases of retaliation through the tariff, though of less importance.

The far larger question of preferential tariffs within the British Empire came before the Government of India in 1903, in consequence of the resolution passed at the Colonial Conference in 1902. The Government of India drafted a despatch, which has since become famous. It contained the following passage.

"Our conclusions . . . as to the terms on which India might participate in a policy of preferential tariffs within the Empire are as follows:

"*Firstly*, that without any such system, India already enjoys a large, probably an exceptionally large, measure of the advantages of the free exchange of imports and exports.

"*Secondly*, that if the matter is regarded exclusively from an economic standpoint, India has something, but not perhaps very much, to offer to the Empire; that she has very little to gain in return; and that she has a great deal to lose or to risk.

"*Thirdly*, that in a financial aspect, the danger to India of reprisals by foreign nations, even if eventually unsuccessful, is so serious and their results would be so disastrous, that we should not be justified in embarking on any new policy of the kind unless assured of benefits greater and more certain than any which have, so far, presented themselves to our mind."

The despatch pointed out that India was a debtor country, that her exports largely exceeded her imports, that the bulk of her exports were raw materials, and that a considerable proportion of them went to foreign countries, where they were mostly admitted duty free. It closed by offering to retaliate upon foreign countries where necessary, if they tried to penalise Indian trade because the United Kingdom adopted preferential tariffs, but asked for a freer hand in their fiscal policy.

There is no getting behind the fact that, despite the many qualifications of the context, the conclusions I have quoted were extremely emphatic. They were far too emphatic at such an early stage of a new movement; and I cannot help thinking that if all the signatories of the despatch were alive to-day, and in the positions they then held, they would not now state their collective views in the same form. It has since been acknowledged that the real idea which lay at the back of the Government of India's despatch was that the views of India would not receive fair consideration. This was gently indicated by a remark in the despatch itself, as follows:

"All past experience indicates that in the decision of any fiscal question concerning this country, powerful sections of the community at home will continue to demand that their interests, and not those of India alone, shall be allowed consideration."

Mr. Chamberlain, in his original proposals, had postulated a position in which India should be treated as a self-governing colony, and should only participate in any fiscal change to the degree to which she was willing. But who was to decide for India? The Secretary of State. And can any Secretary of State be depended on to give fair consideration to the fiscal interests of India? Lord Curzon himself gave a blunt answer to the question in the debate on preferential trade in the House of Lords on May 21, 1908, when he said:

"What has been our experience in the past in India of the manner in which the influence and power of the Secretary of State, as the ultimate ruler of India, are exerted in the direction of the fiscal policy of India? It is that in fiscal matters the Government of India has to take the views of the Secretary of State, whether it agrees with them or not; and those views are more likely to be guided and shaped by English than by purely Indian considerations."

Explaining the motives which prompted the despatch of 1903, he said in the same debate:

"May I confess that our real apprehensions, when drawing up the despatch, about the fiscal future of India, were not so much economic as political? We said to ourselves, 'What guarantee should we have, if any new system were proposed, that India would have free speech in the discussion of the subject or a free judgment in its decision?'"

The only possible reply is that it would have been better to have stated these apprehensions more clearly, instead of setting forth so unreservedly the conclusions I have quoted, which are the pith and marrow of the whole despatch. I do not think the despatch was well drafted, and I cannot think it conveyed the impression which it was apparently intended to convey. Its two principal authors were unquestionably the Viceroy and the Finance Minister, the late Sir Edward Law. I can only quote their own later declarations. In his introduction to Mr. M. de P. Webb's excellent little book, "India and the Empire," published in 1908, Sir Edward Law finished by giving an explanation, not of views newly formed, but of the intention of the despatch. After quoting from the actual text of the despatch, he went on to say:

"In these words the Government of India practically declared for a policy of retaliation. It remains for the Home Government, which may introduce tariff reform, to formulate such proposals as will justify India in accepting also the policy of Imperial Preference. And such proposals can be formulated."

Lord Curzon, in the speech I have already quoted, said: "We had no objection in principle to a system of preferential tariffs"; and he closed his speech thus:

"If we could understand that in any Imperial Conference which takes place the interests of India would be fairly considered; if a pledge could be given that no system will

be forced on her in deference to pressure from England, or from any part of England, which is not suited to her own interests, and that she will not be called upon to accept any system devised exclusively in the interests of England, and that in the event of no such solution being found practicable she will be left in the enjoyment of the degree of fiscal liberty which she now enjoys, then I believe that India, so far as I have any right to speak on her behalf, would gladly join in any such Conference as I have spoken of, and that she would welcome any practical scheme of fiscal reform embracing preferential tariffs within the Empire, because she is already in favour of the main principles which underlie that reform, and because in the respects to which I have referred she has already put into practical operation some of the most effective means of carrying those principles into effect."

I shall say nothing more of the despatch of 1903, except that I think it was hasty. I express this belief in spite of Lord Curzon's declaration in 1905 that it was "composed with due deliberation." I have quoted the views subsequently expressed by its two principal authors, who are best entitled to be heard on the subject with which it dealt. At Manchester, on January 5, 1910, Lord Curzon explained his views in much greater detail, thus:

"There is another bogey which was accepted by Mr. Winston Churchill. . . . It is a bogey produced to frighten the Lancashire working man, but it is not more substantial than the others, and is, like them, a creature of pasteboard and paint. It is the argument that if England decided for Tariff Reform, India will not merely abolish the countervailing excise on the cotton products of her mills. but will impose protective duties upon your cotton exports and upon English manufacturers in general. This fear is a mere chimera. I do not suppose any one in India ever stood up more strongly for the fiscal rights of the Indian people than myself, or that any one ever pleaded more energetically that Indian industries and economic principles should not be sacrificed to the interests either of the United Kingdom or any part of it. But I recognise that India is not in a posi-

tion to take up the attitude I have described. She is not a self-governing colony. She does not enjoy the powers, cannot speak with the voice, and cannot claim the rights of a self-governing colony. The Government of India is in the last resort vested in the House of Commons. It is exercised by the Cabinet and by the particular member of the Cabinet appointed to be Secretary of State. He is in the last resort the real Government of India. Is it likely that any Secretary of State will rise in the House of Commons and seriously propose that India should be allowed to treat this country as, for instance, it might Germany or the United States? It would be a declaration not merely of fiscal independence —it would almost amount to a declaration of hostility between the two countries. If Lancashire is really frightened that such a thing might befall their nerves must be strangely unstrung. . . .

"What, then, would become of India under any scheme of Tariff Reform? I think it would be presumptuous and highly improper for me on an electioneering platform to supply any answer to that question. But this I will say— that there are certain conditions and principles which might be laid down and accepted. The first is that no change should be forced upon India that is not accepted by public opinion in the country so far as it can be ascertained—public opinion, not merely of the officials, but of all the representative classes in India, who are becoming more articulate as time goes on. Secondly, that in any change, if such be contemplated, India must not be left worse off than now, and if her present position cannot be improved, it would be better to leave well alone. Thirdly, that, if possible, an endeavour should be made to strengthen her financial and fiscal position with a view to the development of her own manufactures."

There is nothing in these passages with which I disagree; they are not in conflict with the considerations set forth at the beginning of this chapter; but I would state the issue rather differently. The demand for greater fiscal liberty in India is being presented somewhat blindly and wildly. Requests are preferred for complete fiscal autonomy, without sufficient

recognition of the probable results upon the Indian people of any unfettered concession. If the Indian manufacturers, who are still rather crude economists, had their way, they would at once raise a blind wall of tariffs against not only Great Britain, but against every country. In the interests of India—and certainly not in the interests of England—such a mischievous policy is to be deprecated. So long as Great Britain has control of India, our first duty is to guard Indian interests. These interests would be directly impaired by a measure of complete fiscal autonomy. There is no country in the world where the people are more prone to depend upon the Government than upon themselves. A high tariff, such as many Indian politicians would like to impose, would in the long run impoverish India without developing her industries. I have shown what happened in the case of sugar. The Sugar Duties Acts killed the trade in bounty-fed sugar; but they did not put new life into the indigenous sugar industry. The chief demand for high protection in India comes from the textile industries. Their business is not at present conducted, except in certain well-known instances, on sound economic lines. It would be injudicious to allow them to find a refuge from defective organisation, careless methods of management, inattention to depreciation, and wrong basis of payment for control, behind a high tariff. They need better protection than they now receive, and they should be relieved from manifest fiscal disabilities; but that is a very different thing from complete fiscal autonomy.

The observations I have made are only meant to indicate what would happen if the people of India controlled their own tariff; but so long as the present system of British control continues, such an unqualified concession is in any case out of the question. The proper remedies are that the Government of India should, in consultation with the representatives of the people, be given a larger voice in the settlement of tariff policy; and the Secretary of State, whose ultimate control of fiscal matters should remain

unimpaired, should make his decisions with regard to Indian interests rather than to English votes.

As to Imperial Preference, the difficulty which many people interested in India feel is that the Tariff Reform party as a whole has never fully faced the Indian aspect of the question. It has not studied it, and shows a disposition to ignore it. Individual Tariff Reformers have made satisfactory declarations. Lord Curzon's views have been quoted. Lord Milner, who may be regarded as occupying a detached standpoint, said in the Lords' debate in 1908:

"My contention is that there are obvious respects in which India will benefit from the system of preferential trade within the Empire, and that the fear that she will be damaged depends entirely upon the assumption that foreign Governments will try to strike at us through India—to punish us for adopting a principle in our own tariff legislation which they all adopt themselves. But I do not believe in the least in this bugbear that foreign nations are going to turn round and punish us for doing what they all do."

Nor do I. Far too much has been made of the danger of retaliation upon Indian exports. I believe in a policy of Imperial Preference for the whole Empire, though I hold that the necessity for joint defence will prove a greater unifying influence than inter-Imperial trade. I think that a policy could be framed which, while not conferring very marked benefits upon India, would still present sufficient inducements to bring India within its scope; but I urge that it is practically impossible to discuss such a policy until the Tariff Reform party as a whole, and not individual members thereof, declares its position with regard to India. One preliminary difficulty blocks the way. Upon it the whole fiscal question in India at present turns. Before India can consider the question of Imperial Preference in any form, the excise duties upon cotton cloth must be abolished.

There is no need to enter at length into the story of the Indian cotton excise duties. In a letter addressed to *The Times* on June 2, 1908, Lord Curzon summarised the whole history of the attitude of the Lancashire cotton trade towards the Indian industry, and incidentally made his own position entirely clear. He said he did not wish to revive old controversies, or even to blame Lancashire for the defence of what she regarded as paramount interests of her own; but he remarked that in what had occurred it was "a protective policy pure and simple that she was enforcing in her own interests."

The gradual abolition of the Indian Customs Tariff during a series of years which ended in 1882 represents issues which may well be regarded as closed. In 1894 India was in financial difficulties, and decided to levy a new tariff of 5 per cent. Lancashire objected to the inclusion of cotton goods in the tariff. Sir Henry Fowler, then Secretary of State for India, decided to retain cotton in the tariff, but to impose an equivalent countervailing excise duty on all cotton yarns above a certain quality produced in the Indian mills. In a debate in the House of Commons on February 21, 1895, Sir Henry Fowler defended his policy in a memorable speech. That speech contained one statement which was certainly ingenuous, under the circumstances. He said: "I believe I have tried to do my duty to India as Indian Secretary, and that I have not neglected the interests of Lancashire." Such dual efforts were at that moment quite incompatible with fairness to Indian interests.

In India the excise duties were bitterly resented. Sir William Lee-Warner, then a member of the Viceregal Legislative Council, had previously declared in debate that the non-official vote in the Council was solidly cast in favour of the admission of cotton goods to the tariff, and that it was "justly so cast." Why, then, did the Government of

India make so poor a fight for Indian interests? An article in *The Times of India* of June 17, 1908, offered an explanation which seems probable. It stated: "If we consider the composition of the Government of India at that time we shall realise that the causes of the unconditional surrender of 1894 were to a large extent personal and ephemeral." I am unaware of the authorship of this particular article, but it revealed a certain intimacy with the episode. In 1896 the duties were altered by Lord George Hamilton, for neither political party in England has any monopoly of guilt in this matter. Cotton twist and yarns were exempted from import and export duties of all kinds, while a duty of 3½ per cent. was imposed on woven goods of all qualities, whether imported or manufactured in India. The change was in the further interests of Lancashire, for technical reasons which need not be discussed.

There are two stock arguments advanced in Lancashire and elsewhere in defence of the excise duties. The first is that the present arrangement keeps the price of cloth low, and therefore benefits the poor of India. The argument is fallacious, and in any case does not apply to any material extent, for the fabrics imported into India from Lancashire are not bought by the very poor, despite the assertions of Mr. Enever Todd. The second argument, on which greater stress is laid, is that the excise duties are in pursuance of "our traditional Free Trade policy between India and ourselves." Dr. Cunningham, in his book, "The Case Against Free Trade," has pointed out that in reality the duties come "very near to insistence on protection for the Mother Country." The point was stated far more strongly by Lord Curzon in his letter to *The Times*, but for my purpose it need not be elaborated.

In any case, the second argument is an absolute negation of the whole policy propounded by Tariff Reformers. They cannot consistently advance the plea that the duties represent a Free Trade policy. To do them justice, they make

no such attempt, as a rule, though Mr. Richard Jebb, in a letter to *The Times* in 1910, actually stated that the system of "Free Trade" in cotton, and the excise duties, were to be maintained "in part consideration of the benefits offered to India through Preference." The attitude of those among them who tell Lancashire that the excise duties will be maintained is usually far more elementary. It is summed up in a speech delivered by Mr. Bonar Law, at Manchester, on November 8, 1910, from which the following is an extract:

"India, as you all know, is our greatest export market for cotton. In that market we now compete on equal terms with our Indian fellow-subjects, and it is said that a change in our system would endanger that equality of treatment. Why? What are the facts of the position? The Indian Government is the British Government, and depends on a majority in the House of Commons. If Tariff Reform be adopted the position will remain unchanged, and certainly the last thing which we should propose to do would be to alter our position on the Indian market. But that, of course, is not enough. We have power over India, but no one recognises more fully than I do that we must use that power justly from the point of view of the Indian people. And our opponents say to us, 'We have a moral right to put an excise on cotton made in India, whether the Indians like it or not, because we really in our hearts believe that it is good for them and it is good for us.' Well, when we are in office we shall believe quite as firmly that preference is good for India and is good for us."

Mr. Bonar Law put his views even more bluntly in an earlier speech at Blackburn and they have never been repudiated by the Tariff Reform party. Their net effect is that Tariff Reformers mean to maintain Free Trade in cotton in the Indian market for the benefit of Lancashire, and that they will force India, in addition, to accept such system of Preference as they choose to propound. Until such arguments as those advanced by Mr. Bonar Law are

officially disclaimed by the Tariff Reform party, it is useless to talk to India of Imperial Preference.

The excise duties have done more than any other administrative act of the British in India in modern times to impair the moral basis upon which the British control is supposed to rest. There is no subject upon which British politicians of all classes have been less candid. It is said that the duties are not very heavy. The reply is that if they are not heavy the trade of Lancashire stands in no need of the assistance they afford. It is said that the Indian Exchequer cannot afford to lose the sum it receives from the excise duties. The reply is that in the year 1909–10 the duties yielded £273,000, and the Government which, almost without taking thought, has just deprived India of millions of opium revenue, cannot shelter itself behind such a plea. Lord Morley was instrumental in enlarging the liberties of the Indian people; he neutralised his own good work when he sent Mr. Clark to the Department of Commerce and Industry to defend the excise duties in defiance of the very Council he re-created. Mr. Montagu said in the House of Commons on July 26, 1911:

"You must . . . remember the position of the British official in India. You cannot allow him to be crushed beneath a responsibility to Indian opinion, now becoming articulate and organised; to be crushed between the new responsibility you have superimposed to an undiminished responsibility to British public opinion. Let the Indian official work out his position in the new order of things, where justification by works and in council must take the place of justification by reputation."

How is the British official to justify himself when confronted with an almost unanimous demand for the abolition of the excise duties, a demand with which he is in sympathy, but cannot support by reason of the orders of the Secretary of State? Had the official members of the Imperial

Council been able to vote according to conviction, Mr. Dadabhoy's motion on March 9, 1911, for the abolition of the excise duties, would have been carried by an overwhelming majority, official and non-official.

I do not believe that the abolition of the excise duties is essential to the success of the Indian cotton industry. There has been great growth in the industry despite the duties. The abolition would assist more rapid growth; that is all. It would not, I think, materially affect the Lancashire trade with India. If that trade is sound, it needs no small artificial protection; if it is not on a sound economic basis, protection in India of this character will not save it from ultimate decay.

The issue is vital, not because the duties hamper the Indian mills very greatly, or afford much protection to Lancashire. It is made vital by the causes which led to their imposition, and by the intense and growing indignation thereby created in India. This trivial impost is helping to alienate some of the best and strongest supporters of British rule. More than a handful of mill-owners is concerned. Investments in Indian mills are very widely held. The holders of mill shares range from large numbers of comparatively poor people to some of the most powerful of Indian princes. All unite in detestation of a levy which they regard as unjust; all are led by its continuance to doubt the honesty of British motives. The Indian peoples may desire "boons" on special occasions, but they seek justice first, and they hold that by this admitted response to a Lancashire agitation they have been denied simple justice.

If Tariff Reformers did but realise it, they have before them an unusual opportunity. The people of India should be able to look to the Tariff Reform party for the removal of the duties. They are taunted with indifference to Imperial Preference. How can they be expected to take interest in a policy of Preference when confronted with declarations such as I have quoted, and with daily evidence of unjust treatment

before them? The case should be stated fairly to Lancashire. Its enormous exports to India must rest on very insecure foundations if it cannot face with equanimity the release of £273,000 a year in competition against it. The excise duties have served very little purpose either way, except to arouse grave resentment among important sections of the Indian peoples. Their abolition is an imperative prelude to any further discussion of the question of Imperial Preference in regard to India.

Of Lord Curzon's financial policy I propose to say very little. Its chief interest really lies in the fact that, as he constantly acknowledged, he reaped where others had sown. He arrived in India at the beginning of a period of financial prosperity, which continued without interruption until his departure. Surpluses were his unfailing experience. The secret of his record of achievement was, to some extent, that when he framed a programme, he had the money to carry it out. His predecessors dreamed of reforms, but had no funds to spare, for they governed India during a period of recurring deficits. That is why it is impossible to compare Lord Curzon's Administration with that of Lord Lansdowne. It may be said with truth, however—he often said so himself—that Lord Curzon owed much of his success to Lord Lansdowne's work. Lord Lansdowne and Sir David Barbour in 1893 closed the Indian Mints to the free coinage of silver, with the object of ultimately introducing a gold standard. For a time the measure produced little perceptible result, and in 1895 the value of the rupee had fallen to 1*s.* 1*d.* Thenceforward its value steadily appreciated, and when Lord Curzon began his Viceroyalty it had reached a stable value of 1*s.* 4*d.* In September 1899, the late Sir Clinton Dawkins had become Finance Minister for a period which was all too brief, and he then introduced the Indian Coinage and Paper Currency Act, which was immediately passed. The Act made the sovereign legal tender in India at the rate of Rs 15 to one sovereign, thus giving a gold standard, and securing practical fixity of

exchange. The work was completed by Sir Edward Law, who established the Gold Reserve Fund, derived from the profits on the coinage of silver. The object of the Fund was to furnish a permanent guarantee of fixity of exchange. It has now reached a sum of more than £15,000,000, but its administration is regarded with dissatisfaction by the Indian banking and commercial communities. The Fund is invested and held in London, and the contention is that further accumulations should be held in India.

Though these great financial reforms are perforce mentioned in a few sentences, they are the essence of the subject of this book. Without the gold standard Lord Curzon might still have been a great Viceroy, but his whole Administration would have been different in character, and far less constructive. The gold standard finally terminated those fluctuations in exchange which had paralysed other Viceroys and checked the development of Indian prosperity. All that was done for police reform, irrigation development, education, innumerable administrative improvements, the creation of many new appointments, all those branches of activity which required money, found support in the gold standard and its results. Without its adoption, Lord Kitchener might have gone to India in vain. It rendered possible the more rapid building of railways, and gave an enormous stimulus to commercial development. Lord Lansdowne inaugurated the policy; Lord Elgin had to sit and watch its growth through years of doubt and fear; Lord Curzon arrived just in time to pass the measures which marked its completion, and to reap the full reward. No Viceroy ever sailed for India beneath a happier star.

In his final Budget speech Lord Curzon claimed that "the total sum, part of it non-recurring, but the greater part of it to be continued year by year, that has been given back in my time to the people of India in the form of relief of taxation and other benefactions, amounts to thirteen millions sterling." The sum included remissions of land

revenue after famine, and increased grants for education and local administrative purposes. He raised the limit of exemption from income tax; formerly the tax was levied on incomes from £38 a year upwards, but this was changed to £66 a year. The limit may still seem low, but it has to be remembered that the average income is far lower than in England. The change released from liability 60 per cent. of income-tax payers. The salt tax was practically halved by Lord Curzon and now represents an annual payment of about 2½d. per head of the population. Many people think it should be abolished altogether, but the official reason for its retention in a limited form is that it serves as a convenient form of taxation in the event of a great war. These remissions of taxation were the first of any magnitude which had been given for two decades.

An important reform was the reconstruction of the financial arrangements between the Imperial and Provincial Governments. Each province received a share of the Imperial revenues, in reality calculated in proportion to the revenues it collected and administered. The amount assigned was subjected to revision every five years. The system worked badly. On the one hand, the provinces were encouraged to spend extravagantly in order that their allotment might not be reduced; on the other, they were tempted to be over-rigid in the collection of land revenue, because the basis of their claim rested partly on the amount of their collections. It is probable that to this cause was due the harshness of the revenue collection in parts of the Bombay Presidency, to which allusion was made in a previous chapter. The Bombay Government believed, with some reason, that the Government of India were inclined to treat them with scant consideration of their needs. A further objection to the quinquennial settlement was that it produced periodical and unseemly wrangles between Simla and the provinces. Lord Curzon abolished the quinquennial system, and placed the arrangements with the provinces on a permanent basis,

while leaving sufficient room for flexibility. Lord Hardinge, on the advice of Sir Fleetwood Wilson, the present Finance Minister, now has under consideration a new development of the new system on an even more permanent basis. It will be accompanied by a relief of the provinces from a close scrutiny of their budgets, and is one of the results of the Decentralisation Commission appointed by Lord Morley. These changes are all sound in principle, and represent a great advance in the methods of Indian administration, which is not less valuable because it is not very visible to the public.

Lord Curzon's interest in local self-government, though manifested in many minor ways, found its chief expression in the attention he paid to the affairs of the City of Calcutta. Lord Elgin had taken in hand the question of the defects of the Calcutta Municipality, which had been brought to his notice by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. A Bill was already under consideration in 1899, and was passed with certain alterations, the chief of which was a reduction of the number of elected representatives. It was hotly opposed by the Indian communities of Calcutta, and twenty-eight members of the Corporation resigned as a protest. Its effect was to revolutionise the municipal administration of Calcutta. Though many improvements have followed the change, I do not think the most friendly observer would be willing to deny that the municipal control of Calcutta still leaves room for further progress. Lord Curzon took such intense interest in the improvement and development of Calcutta that the Cities of Madras and Bombay grew jealous of his official benefactions. He said at a banquet in 1903 that he almost felt as if when he laid down the post of Viceroy he should like to become the Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation. In later years, the citizens of Calcutta came to appreciate far more deeply the benefits he conferred upon the city: and differences of view in matters of larger politics have not prevented them from holding his work for Calcutta in grateful remembrance.

The preservation of ancient monuments was a passion with the traveller who had examined with so much reverent care the mighty ruins of Persepolis and Angkor-Wat. I have twice preferred to allow the story of particular branches of Lord Curzon's work to be told again in his own words—in regard to his policy towards native states, and his labours for irrigation. In the domain of archæology he spoke with a fullness and a knowledge which I can admire, but am quite incapable of emulating. I therefore quote the following passages from the remarkable speech delivered by the Viceroy on the passing of the Ancient Monuments Act of 1904:

"It is given to but few to realise, except from books and illustrations, what the archæological treasures of India are. I know of civilians who have spent a lifetime in the country without ever seeing Agra, and who make a pilgrimage to visit it when their thirty-five years are done. A Governor-General's tours give him a unique chance, and I should have been unworthy of the task which I undertook at the first meeting of the Asiatic Society that I attended in Calcutta five years ago had I not utilised these opportunities to visit all the great remains, or groups of remains, with which this country is studded from one end to the other. As a pilgrim at the shrine of beauty I have visited them, but as a priest in the temple of duty have I charged myself with their reverent custody and their studious repair. Our labours may be said to have fallen into four main categories. First, there are the buildings which demanded a sustained policy of restoration or conservation, with most diligent attention to the designs of their original architects, so as to restore nothing that had not already existed, and to put up nothing absolutely new. For it is a cardinal principle that new work in restoration must be not only a reproduction of old work, but a part of it, only reintroduced in order to repair or to restore symmetry to the old. Of such a character has been our work at all the great centres of what is commonly known as the Indo-Saracenic style. We have, wherever this was possible, recovered and renovated the dwellings in life and

the resting-places in death of those master builders the Mussulman emperors and kings.

"The Taj itself and all its surroundings are now all but free from the workman's hands. It is no longer approached through dusty wastes and a squalid bazaar. A beautiful park takes their place; and the group of mosques and tombs, the arcaded streets and grassy courts that precede the main building are once more as nearly as possible what they were when completed by the masons of Shah Jehan. Every building in the garden enclosure of the Taj has been scrupulously repaired, and the discovery of old plans has enabled us to restore the water-channels and flower-beds of the garden more exactly to their original state.

"We have done the same with the remaining buildings at Agra. The exquisite mausoleum of Itmad-ud-Dowlah, the tile-enamelled gem of Chini-ka-Roza, the succession of Mogul palaces in the Fort, the noble city of Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri, his noble tomb at Sikandra—all of these have been taken in hand. Slowly they have emerged from decay, and in some cases desolation, to their original perfection of form and detail; the old gardens have been restored, the old water-courses cleared out, the old balustrades renovated, the chiselled bas-reliefs repaired, and the inlaid agate, jasper, and cornelian replaced. The skilled workmen of Agra have lent themselves to the enterprise with as much zeal and taste as their forerunners three hundred years ago. I have had there the assistance of two large-minded and cultured Lieutenant-Governors in the persons of Sir Antony MacDonnell and Sir James La Touche. Since I came to India we have spent upon repairs at Agra alone a sum of between £40,000 and £50,000. Every rupee has been an offering of reverence to the past and a gift of recovered beauty to the future; and I do not believe that there is a taxpayer in this country who will grudge one anna of the outlay. It will take some three or four years more to complete the task, and then Agra will be given back to the world, a pearl of great price.

"At Delhi and Lahore we have attempted, or are attempting, the same. The Emperor Jehangir no longer lies in a neglected tomb at Shahdera; his grandfather,

Humayun, is once again honoured at Delhi. The military authorities have agreed to evacuate all the principal Mogul buildings in the Delhi Fort, and the gardens and halls of the Emperors will soon recall their former selves. I might take you down to Rajputana and show you the restored bund along the Ana Sagar Lake. There a deserted stone embankment survived, but the marble pavilions on it had tumbled down, or been converted into modern residences. Now they stand up again in their peerless simplicity, and are reflected in the waters below. I might bring you much nearer home to Gaur and Pandua in this Province of Bengal, in the restoration of which I received the enthusiastic co-operation of the late Sir John Woodburn. A hundred and twenty years ago the tombs of the Afghan kings at Gaur were within an ace of being despoiled to provide paving-stones for St. John's Church in Calcutta. Only a few years back these wonderful remains were smothered in jungle from which they literally had to be cut free. If the public were fully aware of what has been done, Malda, near to which they are situated, would be an object of constant excursion from this place. We have similarly restored the Hindu temples of Bhubaneshwar near Cuttack, and the palace and temples on the rock-fortress of Rhotasgarh.

"At the other end of India I might conduct you to the stupendous ruins of the great Hindu capital of Vijayanagar, one of the most astonishing monuments to perished greatness; or to Bijapur, where an equally vanished Mahomedan dynasty left memorials scarcely less enduring. If I had more time to-day, I might ask you to accept my guidance to the delicate marble traceries of the Jain temples on Mount Abu, or the more stately proportions of the mosques at Jaunpur—both of which we are saving from the neglect that was already bringing portions of them to the ground; or I might take you across the Bay of Bengal to Burma, and show you King Mindon's Fort and Palace at Mandalay with their timbered halls and pavilions, which we are carefully preserving as a sample of the ceremonial and domestic architecture of the Burmese kings.

"A second aspect of our work has been the recovery of buildings from profane or sacrilegious uses, and their restitu-

tion either to the faith of their founders, or at least to safe custody as protected monuments. Here we have a good record. The exquisite little mosque of Sidi Sayid at Ahmedabad with the famous windows of pierced sandstone, which I found used as a tehsildar's cutcherry when first I went there, is once more cleared and intact. The Moti Musjid in the Palace at Lahore, into which I gained entrance with difficulty because the treasury was kept there in chests beneath the floor, and which was surrounded with a brick wall and iron gates. and guarded by sentries, is once more free. The Choti Khwabgah in the Fort is no longer a church; the Dewan-i-Am is no longer a barrack; the lovely tiled Dai Anga Mosque near the Lahore Railway Station has ceased to be the office of a traffic superintendent of the North-Western Railway, and has been restored to the Mahomedan community. At Bijapur I succeeded in expelling a Dak Bungalow from one mosque, the relics of a British Post Office from another. The mosque in the celebrated Fort at Vellore in Madras is no longer tenanted by a police instructor. The superb mantapam or Hindu temple in the same Fort is now scrupulously cared for. A hundred years ago the East India Company presented it to George IV. when Prince Regent, for erection in the grounds of the Pavilion at Brighton, and only failed to carry out their design because the ship which had been chartered for the purpose very happily went to the bottom. Next it was used as an arsenal, and finally commissariat bullocks were tethered to its pillars. At Lucknow I recovered a mosque which had been used for years as a dispensary. At Ahmedabad I have already mentioned that the marble baradari on the bund is no longer the dining-room of the Commissioner's house. At Mandalay the Church and the Club are under notice of removal from the gilded throne-rooms of the Burmese sovereigns.

"In this policy, which I have so far described in relation to monuments in British territory, I have received the most cordial of support from the Indian princes in their own states. The Nizam of Hyderabad was willing to do all that I asked him—I only wish that it had been a quarter of a century earlier—for the unique caves of Ajunta and Ellora. He undertook the cataloguing and conservation of

a most interesting collection of old china, copper ware, and carpets that had been lying neglected for centuries at Aurungabad in the tomb of the wife of the Emperor Aurungzeb. The Maharana of Udaipur has willingly undertaken the restoration of the exquisite Towers of Fame and Victory on the hill fort of Chitor, one of which could hardly have survived for many more years. The Maharaja Scindia threw himself with characteristic zeal into similar works in his magnificent fortress at Gwalior. The Begum of Bhopal did all that was required at the Sanchi Tope. Finally, there stands in the remote State of Dhar the huge rock-fortress of Mandu, certainly one of the most amazing natural spectacles in the world. Rising to a height of 1500 feet above the Nerbudda plain, it carries upon its summit, which is thirty miles round, a splendid group of deserted Mahomedan fortifications, palaces, and tombs. These we are assisting the state, which is not rich enough to assume the entire responsibility itself, to place in order. They were fast perishing, victims to the ravages of the jungle, and to unchallenged decay. [The Mandu restorations are now complete.]

"There is yet another aspect of the work of conservation to which I hope that the Bill that we are about to pass will lend a helping hand. This is the custody in collections or museums of rare or interesting objects that have either been torn from their surroundings or whose surroundings have disappeared. Hon. members will be familiar with the larger museums in the capital cities of India, where are collections not without value, but, as a rule, sorely mutilated, often unidentified and uncatalogued, and sometimes abominably arranged. The plan has hitherto been to snatch up any sculptured fragment in a province or presidency and send it off to the provincial museum. This seemed to me, when I looked into it, to be all wrong. Objects of archæological interest can best be studied in relation and in close proximity to the group and style of buildings to which they belong, presuming that these are of a character and in a locality that will attract visitors. Otherwise if transferred elsewhere, they lose focus, and are apt to become meaningless. Accordingly we have started the plan of a number of local museums in places of the nature that I have described,

I may instance Malda in Bengal, Pagan in Burma, the Taj at Agra, Bijapur in Bombay, and Peshawar as localities where these institutions are being called into being, and I hope that in future any local fragments that may be discovered in the neighbourhood of such places, instead of being stolen, packed off, or destroyed, will find their way into these minor collections. Of course the larger provincial museums will continue to attract all classes of objects that do not easily find a local habitation.

"These remarks will, I hope, give to hon. members an idea of the scientific and steadfast policy upon which the Government have embarked in respect of archæology, and which they are invited to assist by passing this Bill to-day.

"By rendering this assistance all will join in paying the debt which each of us owes to the poets, the artists, and the creators of the past. What they originated we can but restore; what they imagined we can but rescue from ruin. But the task, though humble, is worthy, and the duty, though late, is incumbent. . . . All know that there is beauty in India in abundance. I like to think that there is reverence also, and that amid our struggles over the present we can join hands in pious respect for the past. I like to think, too, that this spirit will survive, and that the efforts of which I have been speaking will not slacken in the hands of our successors, until India can boast that her memorials are as tenderly prized as they are precious, and as carefully guarded as they are already, and will in the future be even more, widely known."

In the white beauty of the Victoria Memorial Hall, now slowly rising on the Calcutta maidan, Lord Curzon, through the munificence of princes and people, will presently have added to the architectural treasures of India a structure not unworthy to be compared with the historic buildings of the past. It is deplorable to have to add that, regardless of the work of their predecessors, oblivious of the splendid example of Egypt, and in pursuance of a Philistine policy, the Government of India are now believed to be contemplating the abolition of the post of Director-General of Archæology.

XI

THE TWO BENGALS

THERE are whole regions of India where none but the most adventurous of visitors ever penetrate. Though tourists pass in droves through Rajputana, they leave, for instance, the fascinating peninsula of Kathiawar unregarded: yet Kathiawar has unique attractions of its own. It is a medley of native states, great and small, ranging from the large territories of Maharajahs down to the little fief of a square mile or two held by some feudal noble whose ancestors fought their way to semi-independence. It contains many varieties of territorial tenure, and within its borders the complex system of native state administration can be studied in miniature. In one corner sits the Jam of Jamnagar, trying to forget the glories of English cricket-fields in the contemplation of the florid attractions of three separate palaces. In another, the Maharajah of Bhavnagar, also a representative of modern traditions, is resolutely trying to develop a port upon the most approved principles. Far to the south, in a capital embowered in trees, lived until recently the old Nawab of Junagadh, a Mussulman chieftain of a type now passing away, alternately building colleges and schools out of deference to the new spirit, spending long hours dreaming of the wider lands held by his forbears, but mostly thinking with vain regret of his happier existence as an obscure devotee, before he was called upon to take up affairs of state. Every type of Indian ruler can be seen in that small peninsula; and in their midst dwells, in a tiny reservation

of his own, a quiet diplomatist, "the Agent to the Governor," who has to soothe quarrels and adjust differences and keep a watchful eye upon nearly two hundred chiefs—and on occasion to stimulate the fight against famine—with no more formidable symbol of authority at his back than a handful of police.

Kathiawar is not all bare brown plain dotted with roving black-buck. In the great Gir forest the stranger may still lie awake in his tent at night and hear the roar of lions; he may climb the wondrous temple-crowned Girnar mountain, and gaze in a pellucid atmosphere through vast distances, over the little towns "smouldering and glittering in the plain," to the shining sea beyond; he may stand on the yellow sands of Somnath, and look pensively on the last remnants of the great shrine which Mahmud of Ghazni shattered for ever; he may see the traditional haunts of Krishna, the tree beneath which the pious believe he was standing when the Bhil's arrow struck him, and the hillock whereon his sacred body was burned; he may wander within that grim fortress, the Uparkhot, or rest in a green glade before the mighty rock on which Asoka engraved his admonitory edicts; or he may take boat at dawn at Bedi Bunder, and perchance find himself, just when the tropical sun shoots above the horizon and lights up the waste of waters, in the midst of a school of spouting whales, as I did once, even as did Alexander's Admiral on the coast of Mekran. Kathiawar is just one little nook in India, so remote from the busy world that Lord Curzon was the first Viceroy who ever visited it; yet it is a nook which has an area of 28,000 square miles.

Many such places in India lie outside the beaten track of the tourist. The long line of palm-fringed lagoons on the Malabar coast, with their forgotten towns; all the little Tenasserim ports, where even the reek of jack-fruit and rotten fish soon grows supportable; the great plains of Sind, with their pools swarming with duck in winter; the solid

fortresses of the Western Ghats, which Wellington stormed in the days when he was still young and unknown; the hilly districts of the Central Provinces, where no one ever stops; the heart of Cutch, with its white towns gleaming from afar, and its mirages of palms and cities and ships upon the sea; or, if the traveller is interested in more practical things, such ports as Karachi, with its more than American rapidity of growth, a place that handles every year more wheat than is produced in the whole of Australia. I have not seen them all, though I have seen many; it would take more than one lifetime to see the whole of India; but I linger on this subject in order to throw into relief an example of unknown India far more remarkable than Kathiawar or any other part of the Indian Empire.

Of all the territories of India, none was less known or less cared for until recently than the present province of Eastern Bengal. Assam was comparatively familiar to the world without; it had its own Chief Commissioner, and the tea interest, at any rate, was audible enough. But Eastern Bengal, although its chief city, Dacca, was only 250 miles from Calcutta, was ground less trodden by Englishmen than the Khyber. It lay beyond wide brimming rivers. To reach it was a muddled business of casual trains and ferry-boats and uncertain steamers. In the rainy season it was one vast swamp. No wandering traveller sailed upon its waterways. The very landlords were absentees, squandering upon the delights of Calcutta the substance which their agents wrung from the peasantry. To the officials of the Bengal Government the province was a place of banishment, a land of strange waters to which troublesome or incompetent juniors could be consigned. Good administration stopped short at the Ganges. Beyond was a place where millions lived and worked and fought and committed crime almost unheeded. This is no fancy picture; it is a mild description of the luckless condition into which Eastern Bengal had fallen. But the province had rarely known any

other state. It was accustomed to being left alone. It had always been the nominal possession of some remote and inattentive conqueror. Even when the Moguls spread their Empire throughout Northern India, they were content to leave Eastern Bengal in the control of Viceroys. Sometimes the Viceroys ruled well, and under them Dacca enjoyed a century of prosperity. When the Mogul Empire began to crumble, Eastern Bengal almost disappeared from view. The conquering British did much for the province, although they killed the trade in Dacca muslins; but after their first outburst of activity, they troubled themselves comparatively little about it. It would be easy to demonstrate that under British rule Eastern Bengal as a whole was far better administered than it had ever been before; but it was equally true that until a few years ago it was unquestionably the most backward province of British India.

Yet Eastern Bengal did not deserve the neglect it experienced alike at the hands of the administrator and the traveller. It is one of the most beautiful and most fruitful portions of the Indian Empire. Travelling up its mighty streams, one is voyaging in the midst of an entirely new India, an India almost beyond the imagination. These huge rivers, in places two miles wide, even in the dry season, have nothing in common with the bare brown plains of the Deccan, the placid luxuriance of Madras, or the burning deserts of Rajputana. They have a charm that never fades. In the faint opalescence of early dawn, when the great square-sailed country craft drift past in dim and ghostly silence, they recall memories of unforgettable hours upon the Nile. The vessel seems to be steaming through the morning mists on some illimitable lake. Even in the full glare of noontide the abiding beauty of the scene remains undiminished. The steamer traverses a flat green land, and swings past village after village screened by dense foliage. At every halting-place the crowd of passengers on the banks reveals a cluster of bright colours. The shallow

side creeks are full of quaint craft. The little shore-boats, dancing swiftly across the glittering waters, are like sampans; the vessels floating slowly down the broad bosom of the stream are like a fleet of junks. Immense, unwieldy flats, laden with jute, glide slowly by. In winter there is a keen, fresh, wholesome breeze; and even to those who think they know India the journey is so picturesque and unfamiliar that it is like a voyage into the unknown.

Eastern Bengal is a land where famine can only be caused by floods, and where plague has always been kept at bay; a land of rice and jute plants, for it grows most of the jute of India. The peasantry in the deltaic districts are probably the richest in the world. It is a land where rain never fails, and within its borders it contains the famous Cherrapunji Hills, which have the amazing average annual rainfall of 458 inches. If it has few railways, its waterways are incomparable. It is bountifully blessed by nature, and, given adequate administration and development, may become the finest of Indian provinces. Alike in its neglect and in its possibilities it recalls modern Egypt, but it is an Egypt of broad green rice-fields with half a dozen Niles.

How did it come to pass that, apart from the difficulties presented by physical separation, Eastern Bengal was so long allowed to remain bereft of due attention? The chief reason unquestionably was that the task of the Government of Bengal was beyond its strength. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal had to administer, in 1903, an area of 189,000 square miles, with a population of 78,000,000, and a gross revenue of £7,500,000. No other provincial administrator in India had so huge a charge, and it was complicated by the obstacles to rapid travel. A despatch written at the time stated that if the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal spent the whole of the available season of the year in touring, he could only succeed, during his term of office, in visiting a portion of his vast province. Many important places only received a single hurried visit during the five years which

are the normal period of a Lieutenant-Governor's administration. He had further to control a capital of a million inhabitants, offering delicate problems which no other Governor or Lieutenant-Governor had to face in the same degree. The swollen size of Bengal had already so far been recognised that in 1874 Assam had been constituted a separate province. Even earlier, in 1866, the failure of the Bengal Government to cope with the Orissa famine had led Sir Stafford Northcote to suggest some reduction in the size of the territories controlled from Calcutta.

The position was intensified by the fact that under the most advantageous circumstances the Government of Bengal are always less in touch with the people than any provincial administration in India. In other provinces, the district officers are brought into close and constant contact with the rural population by their land revenue work. Throughout the greater part of Bengal, the Permanent Settlement intervenes to prevent the growth of intimate relations. It is alleged against many Bengal civilians, even to-day, that they are far too dependent upon the much-abused police for their knowledge of the people in their charge. A further drawback to good government in Bengal is that the province is overweighted by the City of Calcutta, which absorbs the attention of the Administration even in the hot season, destroys its sense of balance, and leads it to regard the affairs of distant districts as of minor importance. Bombay has good reason to complain that in past years its Government has taken far too little interest in its welfare; in Calcutta the fault has been on the other side. The capital has drawn all the strength out of the provincial authorities.

Nowhere were the consequences of the defective administration of Bengal more visible than in the eastern districts. Beyond the Ganges officers were few, and the central authorities left them very much to themselves. The district of Mymensingh, for instance, with an area of 6000 square miles and a population of 4,000,000, was often in charge of

a single European officer. For purposes of comparison it may be mentioned that the whole Government of Bombay, with a Governor and staff, a large Secretariat, and a small army of other British officials, only deals with a population of 19,000,000. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that Mymensingh became notorious throughout India for lawlessness and crime. In those portions of Eastern Bengal which were not under the Permanent Settlement, the land revenue administration was persistently neglected. In the permanently settled districts there was no Record of Rights; the cultivators were bullied and harassed by the agents of the absentee *zemindars*, and were never able to feel any reasonable security of tenure of the land they tilled. Land disputes were incessant, and were constantly accompanied by loss of life. In the Backergunge district, another turbulent area, there were frequent riots, of which murders were an almost invariable feature. Very little was spent upon education, or on any branch of the Administration. While money was poured out upon Calcutta and its environs, Eastern Bengal was financially starved. The whole province suffered because its rulers were immersed in the preoccupations of Calcutta. The very railways were constructed, not to serve the needs of these millions of people, but to meet the requirements of the city on the Hooghly. So preposterous are the present lines of communication that even now there are few places in the province which can be reached from Dacca without first travelling half-way to Calcutta.

As to the conditions which prevailed under the old system of control, the testimony of Sir Andrew Fraser, the last Lieutenant-Governor of both Bengals, is conclusive. He says:

"It had been growing increasingly difficult, until it had become practically impossible, to conduct efficiently the administration of this great Province. It was not a matter

only of the burden of work laid on the Lieutenant-Governor, but rather the impossibility of efficient working of the various departments of the Government. No head of a department was able efficiently to deal with the great charge committed to him. The result of this was that many of the districts of Eastern Bengal had been practically neglected. There were many reasons which led the ordinary head of a department, when he found that he could not overtake efficiently his whole charge, to give to Orissa and Western Bengal such time as he had at his disposal; and the districts of Eastern Bengal suffered most from the undue pressure of work."

In no respect does the former system of control of Eastern Bengal deserve severer condemnation than for its utter failure to suppress crime. Not only was murder rife on land all through the southern districts, but the waterways were the scene of operations of the largest system of organised piracy in the world. The waterways of the two Bengals carry, partly in steamers and partly in native craft, a trade estimated at an annual value of £42,000,000. This huge trade, employing nearly a quarter of a million men and boys, was practically without any efficient police protection at all. I cannot gather that outside the vicinity of Calcutta there was a single police launch, solely used, not for inspection, but for purposes of patrol and the detection of crime, on navigable waterways which have a total length of 14,000 miles in the dry season, and about 24,000 miles in the rains. Any one who is inclined to doubt the necessity for the partition of Bengal may be recommended to study the four solid volumes of reports on "Trade Conditions and Crime on Navigable Waterways in Bengal, Assam, and the United Provinces in 1904–06," issued at the instance of the Bengal Government by Mr. P. B. Bramley in 1907. Mr. Bramley is one of the ablest police officers in India, and his monumental volumes must be exempted from the general criticism of Indian reports in an earlier chapter. His reports are

probably the most astounding record of modern crime in existence. Beside them the earlier narratives of land robbery in India written by Sleeman and Meadows Taylor seem pale; yet Mr. Bramley was not writing novels, but was simply an unemotional compiler of cold facts. Though he was dealing with crime in three provinces, it is clear that the heart of the trouble, and the bulk of the crime, was in Eastern Bengal. That the conditions he describes could exist in any land under the British flag seems almost incredible; but the unanswerable proofs are in print. I am not surprised that the Bengal Government, though permitting considerable disclosure of the facts, prudently labelled these volumes "Not for Sale." They are not, however, confidential.

Mr. Bramley showed that organised river piracy had existed in Bengal in greater or less degree for at least a century. At the period with which he dealt, it had very much increased, and the pirates were as desperate, as ruthless, and as bloodthirsty as the Cantonese pirates on the West River in China. A single extract quoted by Mr. Bramley, and typical of hundreds of pages of such evidence, must suffice:

"In all these tracts country craft will be found travelling together in large parties, since single boats are always in danger of being attacked. The variety of crime, ranging from murder and *dakaiti* to petty pilfering, the fearless bold-faced way in which offences are committed, together with the absence of ordinary precautions in concealing stolen property, are all indications of the confidence of these river thieves, who apparently have no fear of apprehension. Evidence was thus obtained in the course of recent inquiries of the mysterious disappearance of numbers of boats with their entire crews, the *modus operandi* in such cases being to cut the boat quickly adrift from its moorings, and when well in mid-stream to suddenly spring on the crew, who are either knocked on the head at once, or thinking that they are close to shore, will hastily jump out and be drowned, as happened in a case in December last, near the borders of

Jessore, Nadia, and Faridpur, as also in a case near Goalundo some years ago, when a whole family was apparently done to death one dark night within a short distance of the residence of the steamer company's officers, who actually heard the cries and went down to the rescue, but found nothing but an empty boat. There is also the case mentioned by the Teota Raja in which a whole family of up-country Brahmans, with the exception of a small boy who is still with the Raja, were all murdered."

The extract is taken from a previous report dated 1903–04. The growth of crime was greatly stimulated by the development of the jute trade. The losses of insured cargoes carried by country boats showed the existence of a widespread system of insurance fraud, and there was wholesale pilfering of goods in transit. Trade and passenger boats were used by housebreakers and robbers as a means of transit and a cloak for the commission of crime. There was much smuggling of opium, liquor, salt, and rubber. The safety of the steamers and the lives of their passengers were constantly endangered by the removal of buoys and landmarks. The villagers on the banks of the rivers invariably looted all property from boats stranded in their neighbourhood. In short, said Mr. Bramley, "life and property on the rivers was unsafe to a degree which could not be tolerated by the Government of any civilised country."

Perhaps the most unexpected revelation in all these disclosures had nothing to do with river piracy at all. The latest edition of the *Gazetteer of India* proudly states that "the crime of *thagi* has practically ceased to exist in India," and mentions that the Thagi Department, specially constituted to deal with it, was abolished in 1904 because the crime was extinct. *Thagi*, it may be explained, is in reality an Oriental version of the "confidence trick," but with the usual addition of the murder of the victim. Mr. Bramley quotes the evidence of other officers to show that there was a gang of two hundred *Thags* in the Dacca district, whose

principal occupation was to pretend to start with pious Mussulmans on pilgrimages to Mecca, and then to murder them for the sake of their valuables. At the time he wrote the disappearance of over one hundred and fifty pilgrims had been traced in eight districts alone; but he says that the inquiries had been performed in a careless and perfunctory manner.

It must be repeated that though crime was prevalent on all the rivers, it was chiefly found in Eastern Bengal, partly because the bulk of the jute trade centred there. It was not dealt with, because the police force was far too weak and too imperfectly equipped, and still more because "duty in the river patrol boats was made a punishment for officers and men of the District Police." A larger and more vital cause was the unwillingness of the Bengal Government to spend money on Eastern Bengal. If the province is still to-day the most criminal region of India, the ultimate cause is the gross and—in spite of their overwork—the unpardonable negligence of the old Bengal Government. It is a significant fact that nearly all the young Anarchists who have been arrested in Calcutta and elsewhere come from Eastern Bengal, and this was notably the case with the men who were charged in the famous conspiracy trial at Alipur. The men of Eastern Bengal are bolder, more determined, and more persistent than their compatriots in Old Bengal; and the better classes of Hindus in the province have qualities which are not easily discernible in the Calcutta *babu.* They approach more nearly to the spirit of the Mahrattas of the Deccan than any other section of the people on the eastern side of India. Owing to decades of bad administration, and often of no administration at all, the province became a breeding-ground for the most dangerous forms of crime. Had it been properly governed, had money been spent upon strengthening its control, we should have heard much less about bombs in India. The Government of India still show something of their old reluctance to

recognise the realities of the situation. Although money should be given to Eastern Bengal without stint and in brimming measure, its claims are still considered without sufficient regard to its grave and special needs.

Such, then, is a glimpse of the condition of Eastern Bengal in the old days. I pass to the circumstances of the partition. The British public have frequently been invited to believe, by people who ought to have known better, that Lord Curzon, in some spirit of malignancy, or in pursuance of some purely imaginary spite, deliberately set himself to anger the Bengal Hindus by dividing up a province of which they formed a part. We are to conceive of him as weaving a subtle web for their discomfiture, and as stealthily scheming to create a new Mahomedan province which could be pitted against the Hindus of Old Bengal, while their brethren in Eastern Bengal were left under the subjection of Islam. As I shall show, it was accidentally revealed after his departure that for fourteen months he was not even aware that any rearrangement of boundaries was in active contemplation. A far more remarkable and significant fact was that the partition question never arose in consequence of the condition of Eastern Bengal, but originated through a matter which did not affect the Bengalis at all. The deplorable state of the eastern province was another quite accidental revelation. Nothing shows more clearly the need for separation which existed than the fact that the maladministration of the eastern districts apparently escaped even the discerning eye of the Viceroy. It was only when attention was directed to the whole question that the shameful neglect which Eastern Bengal had so long endured was brought into public notice.

The movement which led to the partition of Bengal began in the most artless manner possible. When Sir Andrew Fraser sat down in February 1901 to write an innocent letter about a linguistic question, he can never have dreamed that he was setting in motion a sequence of

events which was to lead several years later to a wide-spread agitation in the Province of Bengal; yet such was the case. Sir Andrew, who was then Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, wrote a letter about the substitution of Hindi for Uriya as the language of the law courts of the district of Sambalpur, then under his control. In the course of his observations he appears to have casually suggested that, if Uriya was to be the court language of Sambalpur, that district had better be joined to Orissa; and that this might be done either by placing Sambalpur under the control of the Bengal Government, or by transferring the whole of Orissa from Bengal to the Central Provinces. Out of that casual suggestion the whole great controversy arose. For fourteen months the secretariats wrote about the proposal, built upon it, and gradually evolved fresh schemes for the rearrangement of half the provinces of India. The map of Hindustan was drawn afresh by placid members of Council, blissfully unconscious of the cyclone of popular wrath that was eventually to burst over their devoted heads; and one day the imposing pile of papers came for the first time before the astonished vision of the Viceroy.

What Lord Curzon thought of these ingenuous deliberations was recorded in May 1902, in a half-humorous, half-angry Note, which after his departure obtained in Calcutta a publicity for which it was never intended. He wrote:

"It seems to me a most extraordinary thing that this discussion should have been going on for more than a year without any mention of the matter ever being made to the head of the Government. Had not Mr. Fraser casually alluded to it, when he was staying with me last summer, and in private correspondence, I should have had no inkling that the subject had ever been mooted. And yet during this period secretaries and deputy secretaries have been calmly carving about and rearranging provinces on paper, colouring and recolouring the map of India according to

geographical, historical, political, or linguistic considerations—in the manner that appealed most to their fancy; and finally on Jan. 29, 1902, Sir C. Rivaz recorded that—

"'The idea of transferring Orissa from Bengal to the Central Provinces must be dropped'; and that 'the idea of forming Orissa into a separate Chief Commissionership cannot be entertained.'

"I really feel disposed to ask: Is there no such thing as a head of the Government, and what are secretaries for but to keep him acquainted with the administration? Would it be considered credible, outside the departments, that these really very important issues, affecting the constitution of or dismemberment of provinces, should have been under discussion for more than a year without the file ever being sent or the subject even being mentioned to the Viceroy! They are all matters in which I take a great interest, in which I should be unfit to be the head of the Government if I did not take such an interest, and which I have frequently discussed with Lieutenant-Governors and Chief Commissioners. Meanwhile, the departments, without a word to me, are also discussing it among themselves. Even the Finance Member had an opportunity of recording his opinion upon the manner in which India ought to be parcelled out; and, finally, at the end, a cut-and-dried reply is submitted to the Viceroy as though his signature were a sort of obligatory but perfunctory postscript to the entire discussion.

"I do not suppose for one moment that this has been a conscious omission, or that there has been in anybody's mind the faintest idea of conducting the discussion except according to the most orthodox methods. But that is just where my complaint comes in. People sometimes ask what departmentalism is. To any such I give this case as an illustration. Departmentalism is not a moral delinquency. It is an intellectual hiatus—the complete absence of thought or apprehension of anything outside the purely departmental aspects of the matter under discussion. For fourteen months it never occurred to a single human being in the departments to mention the matter, or to suggest that it should be mentioned. Round and round like the diurnal revolu-

tion of the earth went the file, stately, solemn, sure, and slow; and now, in due season, it has completed its orbit, and I am invited to register the concluding stage.

"How can I bring home to those who are responsible the gravity of the blunder or the absurdity of the situation? Imagine the Colonial Office debating for a year the repartition of the Australian Continent, the incorporation of Tasmania, or the subdivision of New South Wales—and never letting Mr. Chamberlain know. Imagine a discussion as to the boundaries of the Orange River Colony and Natal without the knowledge of Lord Milner. Imagine a Redistribution Bill in England behind the back of the Prime Minister.

"And now, at the close, I am invited to give my assent to a document which, without the smallest previous reference to me, or attempt to ascertain my opinion, assumes my assent to the propositions which have been excogitated by the Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries in their fourteen months of travail, and commits me to the definite statements that 'there is no great reason why Sambalpur should be incorporated in Orissa,' and that 'the objections to the removal of Orissa from Bengal appear to be equally cogent.'"

The document will always be known to the present generation of Indian civilians as "the Round and Round Note." It was published by the *Statesman*, under circumstances which were entirely honourable to that journal; and few more foolish acts have ever been committed by the Government of India than their attempt to punish the *Statesman* by withholding from it the courtesy of the usual supply of official notifications. Under the greatest provocation, but to their infinite credit, the conductors of the *Statesman* refrained from retaliating by disclosing facts which would have covered the authorities with ridicule. Not many newspapers would have resisted the temptation. The publication unconsciously did Lord Curzon a considerable service, for it made clear what he had scorned to say himself, that the partition

of Bengal was quite unpremeditated, and was brought about as the natural result of prolonged official investigation.

At the end of his Note Lord Curzon suggested that the approaching incorporation of Berar into British India might be used as a convenient occasion for examining boundaries all round; and quite incidentally he mentioned Bengal as one of the obvious subjects for further inquiry. The reference to Bengal was contained in a dozen words. The discussion afterwards drifted for a time mainly towards the question of the future of Berar; and the heads of departments again minuted at length, as is their wont. But Sir John Hewett drafted several other proposals, including the transfer of the Port of Chittagong to Assam; and early in 1903 Sir Andrew Fraser, who had meanwhile become Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, followed up Sir John Hewett's recommendation by propounding a much larger scheme, which was the real genesis of the partition of Bengal. The main arguments advanced were that the administration of the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh was exceedingly defective, and that Eastern Bengal needed more immediate personal contact with the higher authorities. It was therefore proposed to attach these districts, as well as the division of Chittagong, to Assam. Lord Curzon for the first time recorded his general approval of this scheme about the middle of 1903, and the Government of India decided to address the Secretary of State and the local Governments concerned about the matter. At the end of the year the proposals were made public. The chief reasons assigned were the only legitimate reasons which could justify such a scheme. They were that the Bengal Government needed relief from its excessive burdens; that the outlying districts of the province required more efficient administration; and that Assam should have an outlet to the sea, which it would find at Chittagong.

It soon became plain that the project submitted at the end of 1903 was extremely, and, as I think, rightly un-

popular in Eastern Bengal. Its chief practical effect would have been to tack on the important districts of Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong to the comparatively small province of Assam. Lord Curzon decided to feel the public pulse. He went in February 1904 on a tour in Eastern Bengal, consulted the local notables at all stages of his journey, and delivered long addresses at Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh. The trend of public feeling was sufficiently manifested by the swarms of small boys in the streets carrying placards on which was inscribed the legend, "Do not turn us into Assamese." The Viceroy, whose addresses were all of the most conciliatory and explanatory character, told the people of Dacca that he had never cherished the intention ascribed to him by the placards, and that they "must be the head and heart of any . . . new organism, instead of the extremities." It is tolerably clear from his speeches during this tour—and I have no other knowledge on the subject—that before he had been very long in Eastern Bengal he realised that the scheme in the form it had then. assumed would be unacceptable. At Dacca he said that many of the objectors to the scheme had themselves furnished the strongest reasons for a more ambitious one, and he spoke of a possible Lieutenant-Governor with a Legislative Council; at Mymensingh he also spoke of possible expansion on some such lines. The Government of India afterwards stated that the larger scheme "emanated from public discussion and public opinion" rather than from themselves; and there can be no doubt that this was the case.

Nevertheless, when Lord Curzon left for England in April the official scheme remained nominally as before, though it was growing almost imperceptibly into a project for a large new province with a Lieutenant-Governor, and with Assam as an adjunct rather than the most prominent feature. The discussion continued all that summer, and the project continued to grow, but it was not until February 2, 1905,

after Lord Curzon's return, that the Government of India sent home their final proposals to the Secretary of State. They were sanctioned by Mr. Brodrick, with certain modifications, on June 9, and the Resolution of the Government of India promulgating the decision was dated July 19.

The new province included, in addition to Assam, the three great Bengal divisions of Chittagong, Dacca, and Rajshahi, and a few minor pieces of territory. It had an area of 106,540 square miles, and a population of thirty-one millions, of whom eighteen millions were Mahomedans and twelve millions Hindus. The Mahomedans predominated, from the simple fact that they are in numerical preponderance in Eastern Bengal. They are not of alien race, but are mostly the descendants of large batches of forced converts made by the early Mahomedan invaders. They are almost invariably poor, and have fallen under the subjection of the Hindus. The province was given a Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue, as well as a Lieutenant-Governor, and the capital was fixed at Dacca, with subsidiary headquarters at Chittagong. Old Bengal received the addition of the district of Sambalpur and certain Uriya states on its western frontier, and was left with 141,580 square miles of territory, with a population of fifty-four millions, of whom forty-two millions were Hindus and nine millions were Mahomedans. A glance at the map will carry a stronger conviction of the wisdom of the change than many pages of argument. The chief amendments made by Mr. Brodrick were the substitution of a Board of Revenue for the proposed Financial Commissioner, and the christening of the new province as "Eastern Bengal and Assam." Lord Curzon had suggested the name of "The North-Eastern Provinces," but the Secretary of State urged that it was undesirable to permit the name of Assam, so widely associated with Indian tea, to disappear from the list of Indian provinces. It may be added that the name finally adopted represented some concession to Bengali feeling.

Both Mr. Brodrick's suggestions were good, and they were accepted without demur.

In their Resolution the Government of India stated:

"It is now more than eighteen months since the first proposals of the Government of India were officially published. In the interval they have been the subject of widespread and searching criticism at the hands of those who were directly or indirectly concerned. Representations from an immense number of public bodies or gatherings have reached the Government. These have in every case been attentively examined; many of them have not been without effect upon the course adopted; and the very last charge that could with justice be brought against the Government would be one of undue speed in arriving at a final decision."

To this statement may be added the testimony of Sir Andrew Fraser, written after he had left India:

"It was passed after the fullest consideration, after public and private discussion with representatives of all the interests concerned, and from no other motive than the real and permanent benefit of the people of the two Provinces. I have never known any administrative step taken after fuller discussion and more careful consideration."

It is not my intention to describe in detail the factitious but widespread agitation which this exemplary administrative change eventually aroused. I have related without any reservation the genesis of a reform which in my belief was the most beneficent work Lord Curzon did in India, although he drifted into it almost unconsciously. If any man is still disposed to think that the Viceroy and his advisers deliberately and maliciously sat down and devised a devilish scheme to break Bengal in twain, and to pit Hindus against Mahomedans, he is insensible to facts. Nothing is clearer than that it did not even occur to the first framers of the scheme that the "Bengali nation" would be perturbed in

the slightest degree by the change. Why should it have done? In 1874, 3,000,000 Bengalis had been included in the Province of Assam, and nobody wore black or poured ashes on his head in consequence. The people who had most right to complain, if any complaint was required, were the nine million Mahomedans who were left to face twenty-four million Hindus in Old Bengal. They said no word; and the truth is that the partition of Bengal has not adversely affected the moral or material condition of a single resident in either of the two provinces. The people who are least disturbed, in spite of their original protestations, are the Hindus. I saw in Calcutta Mr. Saroda Charan Mitter, lately a Judge of the High Court. "You tell me," he said, "that the high-caste Hindus still dominate the position in Eastern Bengal. I tell you," in rising tones, "that the high-caste Hindus will dominate Eastern Bengal fifty years hence, aye, a century hence!" A little talk with Mr. Mitter would teach the ingenuous stranger a great deal about India.

There were several causes which led to the organisation of the agitation against the partition. The first and most immediate was, as Sir Andrew Fraser has pointed out, that it seemed likely to strike at two vested interests. One was the Calcutta Bar. The Bar saw that the creation of a new province must inevitably lead in course of time to the creation of a separate High Court, as assuredly it will; for the Calcutta High Court is more choked with work than was the Old Bengal Government. All the weight and the wealth of the great horde of Calcutta lawyers and their underlings was thrown into the fight against the scheme. The other was the Calcutta native newspapers. They feared that the regeneration of Dacca would bring about the foundation of fresh newspapers at the capital of the new province, and that the people of Eastern Bengal would then turn to Dacca for their news rather than to Calcutta. Hence, to some extent, their inflammatory articles.

Behind the influence of the Bar and the newspapers lay

all the vindictive animosity which had been aroused against Lord Curzon among educated Bengalis by the Universities Act. The wirepullers had been searching for a pretext to attack him, and they found it in the partition. Then there was the undoubted growth of a certain unity of sentiment among Bengali Hindus, upon which I have no intention of casting ridicule. The Bengalis have many admirable qualities; they constitute a substantial proportion of the people of India; they are excitable and easily led; but they are as God made them, and we shall not make the task of administration easier by treating them with a contempt they do not deserve. We have all been a little too inclined to reserve our praises exclusively for the men of the north. Bengali sentiment, then, was a considerable factor, not to be despised; but it should not have been allowed, and was not allowed, to block a reform which leaves the Bengalis as united as they are ever likely to be. The "feelings of solidarity" which can be shattered by a parochial scheme of rearrangement must be singularly feeble. The "Bengali nation" argument was, however, never worth considering; the Province of Bengal, as we have known it, was entirely the creation of the British; the very language in which literary Bengalis clothe their thoughts was created under the stimulus of British influence, and modern Bengali prose is scarcely forty years old. Then the fact that Mahomedans outnumbered the Hindus in the new province gave infinite offence; but there was no community in India more in need of administrative help than the Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal. Already they have derived great benefit from the partition, of which they always heartily approved.

There remains Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, the ostensible leader of the more public movement against partition, an emotional orator who was swept off his feet by the storm he raised but was unable to quell. I think this episode in a varied career is now best ignored. It cannot be said that Mr. Banerjee's influence has always been for good; no man

has done more to turn the thoughts of immature students towards political affairs; but he has been a great power in Bengal, and I do not believe that his frequent agitations have ever been directed against the fundamental basis of British rule. While I was in the Punjab in 1909, long after Bengal had grown somewhat bored with demonstrations varied by a little quiet rioting, I received a telegram from the committee of the Imperial Press Conference, of which I was a member, asking me to submit the name of a representative Indian journalist who might be invited to attend the Conference on behalf of the native Press of India. At once, with his consent, I telegraphed the name of Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, because I considered him to be the most suitable man to represent India at that great gathering; and it chanced that we travelled home together. The partition is to Mr. Banerjee, as I have told him more than once, very much what King Charles's head was to Mr. Dick; but I still hope to see him presiding at a meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of a new prosperity for Eastern Bengal. No one condemned his behaviour during the troubled period of a few years ago more severely or more frequently than I did; but the time has come to forget a series of ebullitions which, though mischievous and even grave while they lasted, have now ceased. Of the boycott, of demonstrations in Beadon Square, of strikes and bonfires and the excesses of students and inflammatory harangues, I shall say no word. Ten years hence both Bengals will be proud of the new province which had such a stormy infancy.

By far the most serious and potent influences which fomented and kept alive the agitation against the partition of Bengal came from England. They began with a telegram from Mr. Brodrick to Lord Curzon on August 16, 1905, upon his resignation, which opened thus:

"I have learned your decision to resign with very deep regret. Throughout your Administration, since your

appointment as Governor-General in 1898, my colleagues and I have endeavoured to give you constant support in the many measures of administrative reform which you have initiated, including the partition of Bengal, upon which we recently adopted your proposals."

I have written some hard things about that telegram; but they were written with a very present consciousness of the effect it had upon India. It is impossible to believe that any Minister of the Crown would deliberately write a telegram, and afterwards permit its publication, with the slightest comprehension that it would have an incendiary influence on a great province of India; and it is further due to Mr. Brodrick to say that, as he himself pointed out in the House of Lords on June 30, 1908, the telegram was only included in the published correspondence at Lord Curzon's own request, and after his approval had been specifically sought.* I think that single fact entitles Mr. Brodrick to complete exoneration on that particular point. His fault was that he wrote things, and telegraphed things, apparently without realising how his words would reverberate throughout a great Empire; but clearly he was not to blame for the trumpeting abroad of a sentence which nevertheless gave rise to the gravest misconception. In India we knew nothing of the circumstances which led to the publication of the message; we only saw the results, and they were unmistakable. The telegram was at once interpreted in Bengal—where the people are always over-ready to read more into words than is intended—as a specific and public indication that the Home Government were not at one with Lord Curzon about the partition. The leaders of the agitation concluded that if they only made disturbance enough

* Since the publication of the first edition of this book I have been informed on the highest authority that Mr. Brodrick's memory was at fault, and that his statement was incorrect. The telegram was not published at the request of the Viceroy, but at the instance of Mr, Brodrick himself.

they could get the decision reversed; and so Bengal was fanned into flame. Mr. Brodrick evidently wrote in all innocence; I have never heard any suggestion that Mr. Balfour's Ministry was not in full accord with the Government of India about the partition; but that one telegram did more to prolong riot and disorder in Bengal than a hundred incitements from the Bengali leaders.

The next factor was a statement supposed to have been made by the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman after he became Prime Minister. I do not know the truth about it, but he was alleged to have said something to an importunate Indian interlocutor, which was immediately magnified, upon transmission to India, into an undertaking to reopen the whole issue. It was probably nothing more than one of those amiable commonplaces with which Ministers are wont to evade troublesome visitors; but its effect was immediate and serious.

It is not easy to dismiss so lightly Lord Morley's occasional statements on the subject while he was Secretary of State. It is true that he took an early opportunity of announcing that the partition was a "settled fact," and from that attitude he never really veered a hand's-breadth; but there was always some little reservation, some slight hesitancy, some implication of doubt, which served to raise false hopes. Lord Morley's demeanour towards the partition was rather inexplicable; but however that may be, the one thing to be remembered is that in practice he solidly upheld the reform.

I dwell upon these incidents in England of set purpose. Had a single member of the new Ministry got up in Parliament, and made a resolute, trenchant, and unequivocal statement that the partition was unalterable, and would be upheld at all costs, the agitation in Bengal would have died away within a month. Educated Bengalis can see as far as most men. They do not waste time ramming their heads against a brick wall.

With the broad effect of the partition in contributing to produce unrest in India I shall deal in a later chapter. Meanwhile one other point requires passing mention. It is sometimes suggested that it might be expedient to place each of the two Bengals under a Chief Commissioner, and then to reunite them under a full Governor at Calcutta, a Governor brought from England, after the fashion of Bombay and Madras. I can conceive no more mischievous or unwise change. I believe the present system works admirably in the southern and western Presidencies, and that it would be a great mistake to reduce the *status* of the Bombay and Madras appointments. There are very special reasons, into which I will not enter, but quite unconnected with the proportion of population dealt with, why the south and west should retain their present method of control; but so long as the Viceroy spends the greater part of the cold weather at Calcutta, it would be a blunder of the first magnitude to have a second peer on the other side of the *maidan*. A Governor with two Chief Commissioners to do his work would in any case find himself a ridiculous excrescence; the example of Sind affords no parallel; there are technical difficulties, for the Bengal Secretariat could not be moved, and we should see the spectacle of a Viceroy, a Governor, and a Chief Commissioner all pervading Calcutta with their retinues in winter; and while such a change would serve no useful purpose, it would tend to a great duplication of work, and would very soon revive the very evils which the partition was intended to avert.

The first Lieutenant-Governor of the new province was Sir Bampfylde Fuller, who had previously been Chief Commissioner of Assam. He went there towards the end of 1905, and found himself in a position of extreme difficulty. He was the object of malignant attacks in the Calcutta Press, of obnoxious criticism in Parliament, and of gross and constant misrepresentation. He did a great amount of excellent though perhaps sometimes impetuous work in

creating the new Administration, the value of which was never recognised; and he had to do it with the bitter consciousness that he was not being supported as he should have been. Had an archangel been placed in charge of Eastern Bengal at that juncture, he would have found his position almost unbearable; and Sir Bampfylde Fuller really showed great restraint under very trying circumstances. At length he became involved in difficulties with the Government of India. There were two schools which were hotbeds of sedition, and he desired to have them disaffiliated from the Calcutta University. The Senate of the University objected, whereupon he appealed to the Government of India; and, on failing to receive their help, he tendered his resignation, which was accepted without any show of hesitation. The best proof that Sir Bampfylde Fuller was right is that the Government of India were afterwards compelled to order the disaffiliation of these very schools. Lord Curzon said in the House of Lords that Sir Bampfylde Fuller "was sacrificed in the mistaken belief that it would pacify the agitators," and in saying so he expressed the general opinion, at any rate in India.

The case of Sir Bampfylde Fuller suggests several reflections. The first is that it is extremely unwise on the part of any public officer, or of a man in any walk of life, to tender his resignation if he does not mean it to be accepted; the second is that, as Lord Cromer pointed out, it is advisable for Governments to give every officer an opportunity of reconsidering his resignation, especially when it has been submitted in a moment of exasperation, and in times of great difficulty; and the third, which I venture to point out myself, is that it is the bounden duty of Governments, especially in a country like India, never to convey even the appearance of sacrificing an officer to popular clamour. The worst mistake about the case of Sir Bampfylde Fuller was that it added one more to the many factors which kept alive the agitation against the

partition, an agitation which was chiefly manifested, be it remembered, not in Eastern Bengal at all, but in Calcutta.

Sir Bampfylde Fuller was succeeded on August 20, 1906, by Sir Lancelot Hare, under whom the new province gradually assumed tranquillity, and he in his turn has been followed in 1911 by Sir Charles Bayley, an energetic officer who has already done good work in Eastern Bengal.

The agitation is now a thing of the past, and is not likely to be renewed. Even Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee stated in his journal, the *Bengalee*, in 1910: "We indeed recognise the fact that the partition has come to stay, and we are not anxious to upset it; but we press for its modification." The two statements were mutually destructive, and were followed by a characteristic retractation. I place no interpretation upon them, but merely point them out as a sign of the times. In the same year Mr. Saroda Charan Mitter, whom I have already quoted, confessed in a public speech that he told the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Secretary of Bengal at the time of the partition that he saw no harm in it. To that view he adhered, "maintaining that it had done much to bring the Bengalis of the East and West nearer together." Mr. Mitter is an exceedingly shrewd man, and I believe his statement to be literally correct. An attempt by Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu to raise the issue afresh in the Imperial Council in 1910 fell absolutely flat. The blows which discomfited him were delivered by two elected Indian members, Moulvie Syed Shams-ul-Huda, a Mahomedan from the new province, and Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq from Behar. Mr. Shams-ul-Huda roundly declared that before the partition "no one thought of Eastern Bengal at all," and the revenues drawn from the province were largely spent in and around Calcutta, a fact I have already mentioned. Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq said he wished Mr. Basu had brought up the question of partition as a resolution, and then "the voting would have shown what India thought." The British public, he said, had

heard only one side, "but the time was coming when they would hear the other side with no uncertain voice." If the Government meddled with "this beneficent measure" it would be committing an act of supreme folly, and would create unrest and discontent where none existed now. In 1911, in the Imperial Council, Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu said, with a few pardonable oratorical tears, that as they had "agreed to bury the hatchet" he would not refer to circumstances which would "only revive painful memories."

The agitation, in short, dwindled long ago, and has now entirely collapsed. It was always factitious and unreal, and full of misrepresentation, and nowhere was this the case more than in the speeches of the self-appointed "sympathisers with India" in the House of Commons. In his farewell speech in India Lord Curzon predicted that the "Bengali patriots" who then denounced him for giving them that boon would one day bless his name for it; and I think he will live to see the day, for the Bengalis have far too much intelligence to be unwilling to own when they have been in the wrong.

Meanwhile, I wish visitors to India would not stop short at Calcutta, but would go through the newly discovered land of Eastern Bengal, and see for themselves what has been done in the short space of six years. The province is no longer content to be dragged at the tail of Old Bengal. A new and independent provincial spirit is springing up. Eastern Bengal is beginning to recognise all that a separate existence means to it. Its civil servants, from the Lieutenant-Governor downwards, take a pride in the great work of regeneration which has been entrusted to them. Their task is enormous, and the workers are still far too few. They are like men who have been set to create a new colony out of a land of chaos, and have entered upon their labours with the dogged enthusiasm which distinguishes the Englishman in India at his best. Eastern Bengal is fortunate in that it has found good men, who are placing the province

on the right path. It did not receive at its inception the sweepings of the Bengal Secretariat. It includes within its *cadres* some of the ablest and most devoted civilians in India.

Dacca, the new capital, is no longer forlorn and desolate. The creation of the new province has revived its "dreams of a dead past that cannot die." Fresh gleams of prosperity have been shed upon a city that seemed destined to moulder on into oblivion, and Dacca is likely to regain more than a little of its ancient greatness. Its population fully realise the benefits they are deriving from their altered position, and rejoice at the change. Trade is reviving, and in some quarters building sites are steadily increasing in value. Beyond the confines of the old city, new Dacca is rapidly arising. A Government House, which is nevertheless rather small for the needs of a Lieutenant-Governor, is under construction, as are the Secretariat buildings, and the people now feel that their province is to be a permanent reality. Modest but comfortable residences have been built for the principal officers of the new Government. After a time the rich *zemindars*, who have hitherto maintained houses at Calcutta to be near the seat of government, and have rarely visited their neglected estates, will find it necessary to build houses in Dacca. Parliamentary powers recently sought by the Secretary of State will afford an opportunity for the creation of a High Court, which cannot long be delayed. That Dacca will at no distant date recover something of its former proud position in the land of great rivers seems certain.

In every branch of the new Administration great activity is visible. A survey and record of rights for the entire settled area of the province are being prepared, and thus the incessant land disputes, with their frequent accompaniment of murder, should be checked. Elsewhere, in those districts in the north-eastern portion of the province which are not under the Permanent Settlement, land is being

steadily taken up, and the land revenue is increasing. The waste places of the province are being brought under the plough. The public works, so long pinched and starved, are receiving a proper allotment of expenditure. An energetic educational policy, inaugurated by Sir Bampfylde Fuller, is being steadily pursued. The demand for higher education is perhaps greater in Eastern Bengal than in any province of India. The Administration have dealt with every stage of educational reform, improved their schools and colleges, given many grants for primary education, and encouraged Mahomedan educational institutions and the cause of female education; and large sums have been spent in improving the supervising and inspecting agency. Questions of rural sanitation and water-supply, issues which perhaps concern the welfare of the people most nearly in these malarious low-lying regions, are receiving urgent attention. If Eastern Bengal has escaped plague, its mortality from malaria is abnormal. The improvement of railway communications is under consideration, and no doubt in due course the provincial port of Chittagong will be linked up with the interior. The trade of the port has more than doubled since the partition, but is still lamentably small. The great waterways of the province are to receive their share of attention, and it is gratifying to be able to add that the cost of the river police, about whose former defects I have said so much, is to be borne by the Government of India. The whole question of river crime is now being firmly grappled with.

Until 1910 the new province was seriously handicapped by the lack of settled financial arrangements with the Imperial authorities, and was under the necessity of seeking doles. In that year a settlement, fixing an annual standard of expenditure, was made by the Government of India. It is said to be "not ungenerous," but I prefer to describe it as still inadequate. The attitude of the Government of Eastern Bengal towards the Finance Minister has always

been far too apologetic. Mr. Percy Lyon stated in the Imperial Council in 1910, almost as though it were a matter on which to take credit, that the expenditure of the province was below the level of expenditure of any of the larger provinces of India. If that is the case, it is not a matter for pride, but for infinite regret. In the same speech Mr. Lyon said, in pursuance of his deprecatory line of argument, that Eastern Bengal only had 10,000 civil police as against 33,900 in the United Provinces. The facts I have already set forth show that there is no province in India more urgently in need of very large additions to its police than Eastern Bengal: and for some years to come its proportion of European police officers ought to be substantially in excess of the proportion in other provinces. Both the Government of India and the other provinces are far too disposed to consider the needs of Eastern Bengal upon a basis of equality with those of the rest of the provincial administrations: but a study of the situation shows that this point of view is wrong, for the needs of the province are necessarily abnormal, and must continue to be so for a decade or two. A few Indian members of the Imperial Council still cherish the delusion that the heavy expenditure now required is "the result of the partition," but the contention is obviously absurd. It is the result of the long years of neglect, during which thirty millions of people were left to take care of themselves while their resources were being drained into Old Bengal; it is the result of the maladministration which turned one of the fairest provinces of the British Empire into a land of lawlessness and crime.

In one respect Eastern Bengal is reasonably entitled to claim relief from a heavy demand on its exchequer. The province is still compelled to maintain a large force of military police upon the north-eastern frontier of India. The political changes of the last few years, the reappearance of Chinese soldiery on the Assam frontier, the revival of the question of Tibet in an entirely new form, make it no longer

possible to impose this burden on a young and struggling Administration. The cost of the protection of the north-eastern frontier should be made solely an Imperial charge.

I said in my opening chapter that I believed the partition of Bengal to be the greatest and most beneficent of Lord Curzon's labours in India. Nothing that he did brought him viler calumny, both in India and in England; but he has not had to wait for the vindication of history. Wisdom is already justified of her children; he built even better than he knew; and within five years the very men who denounced him most were silenced. It is given to few constructive statesmen to encounter such good fortune.

XII

ARMY REFORM AND LORD KITCHENER

I. THE REORGANISATION OF THE ARMY

When Lord Curzon arrived in India, the officer who held the post of Commander-in-Chief was General Sir William Lockhart, a distinguished soldier who had fought in the Mutiny, and who had seen much service in later years. He had fought repeatedly on the Indian frontier and elsewhere, and finally directed the operations in Tirah. His health was failing, partly as a result of the prolonged strain of the Tirah campaign, and he died on March 18, 1900. General Sir Power Palmer was then appointed provisional Commander-in-Chief, though it was understood almost from the outset that he would be replaced when circumstances permitted by General Viscount Kitchener of Khartum. The prolongation of the South African War made it necessary to give Sir Power Palmer the substantive appointment; but he was never expected to complete the full term of office, and in November 1902 Lord Kitchener arrived in India and became Commander-in-Chief. Though many useful reforms in the Army of India were effected in the earlier years of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, the chief interest of the military side of his Administration lies in the period subsequent to Lord Kitchener's arrival. From the time the command became vacant, Lord Curzon had repeatedly pressed for the appointment of Lord Kitchener. It was part of his policy to seek the best men who could be found; he knew that the system

of Indian defence required reconstruction, and he believed Lord Kitchener to be the soldier best qualified for the task. Lord Kitchener, on his part, was equally eager to go to India. He regarded the Indian command with a feeling akin to the enthusiasm with which Lord Curzon had entered upon the Viceroyalty, and he passed with alacrity from the dusty camp at Vereeniging to the most coveted post a British general can hold.

Critics of Lord Kitchener's work in India sometimes invite us to believe that he accomplished very little during his seven years' residence in that country, that the Indian Army was reasonably efficient when he arrived and little better when he left, and that he merely effected a series of imperfect rearrangements. Criticism of this description carries its own condemnation. When Lord Kitchener reached India, the administration of the army was in a stage of transition. The distinguished officers of an earlier day had effected many improvements. It was the work of Lord Roberts and Sir George Chesney, among others, which rendered possible the further reforms of Lord Kitchener; but much remained to be done. The old system of separate Commanders-in-Chief for Bombay and Madras had been abolished, and the whole of the military forces had been unified under one head; but the organisation and distribution were still based upon obsolete conceptions. The views which dominated military policy immediately after the Mutiny were only just being abandoned. The advantages conferred by the development of a great network of railways had not been properly utilised. It was not clear whether the Army of India was controlled and distributed with the object of preserving internal peace or of repelling attack from without. Stray units were scattered about the land in isolated cantonments, and sometimes British regiments were found divided up into three or four detachments, so that in such cases a whole battalion rarely drilled together. The staff organisation was defective, and was not in accord

with the scientific requirements of modern warfare. The Army was able to wage war against the frontier tribes with distinction and success; but it was certainly not administered with due regard to its ultimate responsibility, which must always be preparedness to resist the advance of a powerful and numerous European foe. Its mobilisation scheme was unsatisfactory, and it was only ready to place four divisions in the field if called upon to begin a great campaign.

The supply and transport arrangements were unequal to the strain of field service, as had been disclosed in the Chitral campaign and again in Tirah. The medical organisation needed improvement, for though there was a splendid supply of competent surgeons, they lacked a sufficiency of ambulance-bearers and field medical equipment. The artillery had not received their new guns, and the question of supplying the latest pattern of small-arms to the British cavalry and infantry had not been satisfactorily settled. Much work was still necessary in order to complete the policy of enabling India to manufacture on the spot her own supplies of warlike stores. Many of these requirements had been recognised by the Indian military authorities, who had been deterred from satisfying them chiefly by years of financial stress; but if Lord Kitchener had the good fortune to command more money than his predecessors, he should not be deprived of the credit of accomplishment. He placed the Army of India on a far sounder footing, he made it a more efficient instrument of warfare, and by the time he left had rectified the defects I have recited. He did great things in India, and did them well; but it is desirable to take a balanced view of his achievements.

There can be no doubt, I think, that the considerations on which Lord Kitchener's ideas of reorganisation and redistribution were originally based ultimately underwent considerable modification, and that the marked changes visible in Asia after his arrival affected his plans. The

efforts that have been made to prove the contrary, and to show that his intentions never varied, only do him a disservice. In 1902, and for some time afterwards, the dominating thought in the minds of those responsible for the defence of India was the possibility of menace from Russia. The Orenburg-Tashkent Railway was approaching completion, and seemed likely profoundly to modify the military situation in Central Asia. It was pushed forward without cessation even after Russia found herself at death-grips with Japan, and it enabled troops entrained at Moscow to alight within ten days, and without changing carriages, at a point only eighty miles north of Herat. That the Government of India were deeply exercised about the Tashkent Railway, and the simultaneous reports of Russian activity on the line of the Upper Oxus, was well known at the time. That Lord Kitchener shared these apprehensions to the full was no secret.

In this matter there is fortunately no need to depend upon mere assertion. Mr. Brodrick put the situation in a very pointed way in a despatch dated December 2, 1904, in which he said: "The danger of complications on the north-west frontier has been rendered greater by the completion of an additional strategic railway from Central Asia to the northern boundary of Afghanistan." On May 11, 1905, Mr. Balfour, then Prime Minister, in a memorable speech in the House of Commons upon Imperial Defence, took occasion to discuss the extent of Indian military resources in the event of war with Russia. He said he did not regard the Indian problem (of defence) as otherwise than grave, and he declared that Great Britain would not tolerate the slow absorption by Russia of Afghanistan. Such a warning, uttered at such a moment, had only one meaning. It showed that the Imperial authorities, in common with the Government of India, regarded with anxiety the reports of Russian military activity in Central Asia.

Those reports had meanwhile become extremely explicit. It was said that, despite the struggle in Manchuria, Russia had sent reinforcements to Central Asia which more than doubled her existing garrison; and it was alleged that she had under arms beyond the Caspian a force of 200,000 men. I have reason to know that the report of these Russian reinforcements was fully credited at Simla, and for a time in London also. Through my own agents, I received similar intelligence, which I had then no reason to doubt. Russia was at that moment gravely troubled by internal disturbances, due to dissatisfaction with the conduct of the war in the Far East; and the explanation offered was that she proposed to distract public attention by creating a diversion in Afghanistan, which was considered by her statesmen to be a popular move.

The motive ascribed to Russia was unfounded. The report of the reinforcements in Central Asia was largely untrue, though it had some foundation. In after years I learned from Russian sources the true explanation of the story about the 200,000 men. I pause to tell it for the first time because it throws a flood of light upon the way in which misunderstandings sometimes arise between two great nations; and the statements here made may be accepted as authoritative, because they come from persons directly concerned. While Lord Kitchener and his colleagues were anxious about the doings of the Russians in Central Asia, the Russians themselves were very anxious about Lord Kitchener. They learned through their own sources—the Russian intelligence branch in India was in some respects peculiarly efficient at that time—that the Commander-in-Chief had been riding up and down the frontier, and had examined every pass from the Gomal to the Pamirs. They read in the papers that he was designing new cantonments, and meant to concentrate the bulk of the Indian Army on the frontier. They fancied he had come to India with warlike intentions, and credited him—I believe quite

erroneously—with a strong antipathy to Russia. At last they grew thoroughly alarmed, for it seemed to them that their defeats in Manchuria gave him the opportunity he appeared to be seeking. They were never quite convinced that Great Britain would try to strike at Russia in Central Asia, but the Japanese Alliance had made them deeply suspicious of British motives, and they thought it best to be prepared.

That was the reason why work on the Orenburg-Tashkent Railway was never stopped for a moment, although Russia was engaged in deadly conflict elsewhere. The authorities in Central Asia took a further step. They sent a despatch to St. Petersburg, reviewing the supposed preparations of Lord Kitchener, pointing out their inability to resist a British advance, and urgently demanding copious reinforcements. The views thus expressed found complete credence in the Russian capital, and though more troops were required in Manchuria, it was decided to reinforce the Central Asian garrisons by large additions. Had the decision been carried out, the Russian forces near and beyond the Caspian would eventually have reached a total of 200,000 men. The movement of troops actually commenced, and a small proportion of the desired reinforcements arrived in Central Asia; but before the scheme could be completed the situation in Manchuria grew so desperate that the remainder of the troops designated were sent to the Far East. How the British Government became acquainted with the Russian intentions it is not discreet to inquire; but judging by my own experience, what happened was that in passing through the subterranean channels of international intelligence, the evidence of intention was converted into an allegation of completed fact. A veil had been drawn over Central Asia: no foreigner was allowed to travel by the Tashkent Railway; it was difficult to find out what was going on; and when emissaries who had become aware of an order declared that it had been carried into effect, there was

no means of disproving their statements. The Russian Government promptly issued a denial, but hardly any one then believed them. One of the few exceptions was the late Sir Charles Dilke, who for years afterwards used to denounce the story in the House of Commons, though he did not seem to be aware that it was not entirely imaginary. I will only add that several such experiences have led me to marvel at the complete misunderstanding of each other's motives frequently manifested by the Great Powers; and though I have little faith in the new exponents of international peace, I believe there are few modern wars between civilised nations which could not and should not have been avoided.

During the years 1903–4–5, therefore, the possible developments of Russian policy were the dominating consideration in the minds of those responsible for the defence of India, both at home and on the spot. The anxiety of the Cabinet was publicly expressed by the Prime Minister, and it was reflected in the earlier projects of Lord Kitchener. In 1907, and again in 1909, Lord Kitchener explained in Council that "his policy of redistribution did not contemplate the massing of troops on the North-West Frontier, and that he was entirely opposed to any such policy." No doubt his scheme, as it took final shape, was in accordance with this disclaimer, but other conceptions at first held the field. The problem of Indian defence was materially affected by three successive events, all of which occurred during and after 1905. The first was the final defeat of Russia by Japan; the second was the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance upon a closer basis; and the third was the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention. None of these events made the essential requirements of Indian defence any less real or urgent; but they all had this cumulative effect, that they made it far less necessary to have troops ready to fling on the instant into Afghanistan, and to that extent they modified the calculations of Lord Kitchener.

It was then that the theory emerged—and an excellent theory it was—that the divisions were to be "echelonned back" from the frontier along the main strategic lines of railway. It had also been realised in the meantime that the cost of making large increases in the forces actually stationed on the frontier would be prohibitive.

Before Lord Kitchener had been six months in India, he made a thorough examination of the frontier, such as no Commander-in-Chief had ever made before. His journey was accomplished in two sections. In the fierce heat of April, he started from Nushki, far to the west of the hills around Quetta, and inspected every pass and valley of importance from Baluchistan to the Khyber. In the following August, he started forth again and travelled from the Malakand to Chitral and Gilgit, and to the lonely passes leading to the Pamirs. It was during these expeditions that Lord Kitchener first examined the projected alignment of the Loi-Shilman Railway, to which allusion has been made in the chapter on frontier affairs. He has been quite unjustly criticised with reference to this scheme, of which he is commonly regarded as the author. The first surveys for a railway along the line of the Kabul River were carried out so long ago as 1890. The second preliminary surveys were conducted in 1902, before Lord Kitchener arrived in India. His share of responsibility was that he gave the scheme his support, and suggested certain changes, including a larger gauge. He further suggested, though I am not aware that he ever formally proposed, the creation of a large cantonment on the breezy heights of Torsappa, near the site selected for the railhead. After a year or two the Torsappa suggestion was dropped, and nothing more was ever heard of it. Lord Curzon's share in these transactions was that he sanctioned the second surveys, and afterwards the commencement of the line, out of deference to military opinion, though with considerable reluctance. I have already stated my view of the Loi-Shilman Railway, which is, briefly, that

strategically it is imperative, but politically it is inexpedient. It is unfair to attack Lord Kitchener for supporting it. He saw, as all must see who have visited the locality, that it will be impossible to send a large force into Afghanistan by the Khyber route until the line is built.

Another scheme with which Lord Kitchener's name was prominently associated was the proposal to establish a large cantonment at Mastung, south-west of Quetta, to contain a force variously estimated at from 6000 to 8000 men; and the complement of this scheme was to be a substantial increase in the Quetta garrison. The Mastung scheme was found to be impracticable, owing to difficulties about water and to the enormous expenditure involved, and in due course it was dropped. I have never understood why so much pains should have been taken to explain it away, for it is a natural development of the necessity to be ready to move troops to the Helmund on the one hand, and to Seistan on the other. The difficulties could not have been foreseen, and the efforts to maintain an appearance of consistency seem unnecessary. Sir George Arthur, who appears to write with some authority, has since stated that Lord Kitchener left behind him a "full scheme . . . as a legacy to be carried out in time," and that the scheme includes the creation of the two great cantonments at Torsappa and Mastung, as well as the completion of the Loi-Shilman Railway.

My purpose in mentioning these two instances is to show that there is good ground for believing that Lord Kitchener's reforms, as finally carried out, were not entirely in accordance with his earlier proposals. His general attitude towards the North-West Frontier question is somewhat difficult to define, because it was never publicly disclosed. It was understood, however—and officers of the Kitchener "school" favoured the impression—that he held the view that the tribal country must ultimately be conquered and administered right up to the political frontier. On the

other hand, his adherence to this view was essentially academic, for nothing was actually done while he commanded in India to develop the slightest semblance of a "forward policy." The small two-fold campaign against the Mohmands and the Zakka Khel, conducted under his direction, was inevitable, and its only fault, for which he was not to blame, was that it was too hastily completed. He was fully entitled to claim, as he did on leaving, that "his voice had ever been for peace." He was anxious that the Amir of Afghanistan should make good roads in his territory, and that his troops should be trained by British officers. The desire, though it was not gratified, and though it was then impolitic, was strictly in pursuance of the obligations Great Britain has undertaken for the defence of Afghanistan. He was a supporter of the notion, which I hold to be grievously wrong, that if Russia was allowed to come down to the Persian Gulf she would be more vulnerable; but he was steadfast in discouraging suggestions that Great Britain should add to her military responsibilities at the head of the Gulf, because he held that the Army of India might be unequal to the strain. Some of these views may be a fit subject for disagreement, for reasons which I have stated elsewhere; but they were mostly held as abstract opinions, and not practically pursued, and those who differ need not visit them with heated condemnation.

The broad feature of Lord Kitchener's reorganisation scheme, as finally adopted, was the introduction of the divisional system upon an extended scale. When this work was done, the Army of India could, upon mobilisation, place in the field nine infantry divisions each consisting of three brigades, and eight cavalry brigades; whereas under the old system only four divisions, not too well equipped, were immediately available. The figures have been contested, but I see no reason why Lord Kitchener's assurances should not be accepted. He has himself admitted that for the later divisions "improvised arrangements" would still "to

a certain extent" be necessary. The composition of the brigades has been altered. Formerly a division consisted of two brigades, and each brigade was composed of two British and two native battalions. There are three brigades in the new divisions, two being composed of native battalions and one of British troops. The new composition has been subjected to much criticism, but only warfare on a large scale can supply the requisite test, and meanwhile it may be regarded as probable that the rearrangement is advantageous. The whole of the Indian forces were grouped afresh into two great commands, the Northern Army, with its headquarters at Murree and its striking-point at Peshawar, and the Southern Army, with its headquarters at Poona and its striking-point at Quetta. The divisions are massed along the main lines of railway, and though minor detachments have been in many cases withdrawn, such concentrations as have been made have not ignored the necessity for the preservation of internal order. The whole of Lord Kitchener's reorganisation and redistribution scheme may be summed up in the statement that, without taking into account possible difficulties beyond the frontier, it enables India to do what she could never have done before without great delay. It enables her rapidly to despatch two powerful armies, one to the line of the Helmund and the other to the heights beyond Kabul; and it still leaves her with sufficient troops to keep the peace within her borders. When she has mobilised and despatched her armies she must await further help from overseas.

In a sense, Lord Kitchener's scheme made for greater centralisation; but it also made for devolution, as more than one divisional commander has assured me. Both divisional and brigade commanders were given more direct responsibilities and larger powers, while the commanders of the Northern and Southern Armies became in reality inspecting officers of high rank. The native regiments were renumbered and their peace establishments brought into

uniformity. The whole of the artillery was rearmed with quick-firing guns, and all the British troops received the new rifle. The Supply and Transport Corps was removed from its comparative isolation, and made an integral part of the organisation for warfare, and divisional and brigade commanders were made responsible for supply and transport expenditure. A Staff College on the Camberley model was started at Quetta, and its *cachet* is already not inferior to that of the home establishment. The factories for providing the Indian Army with munitions of war were brought to completion. A host of minor reforms, which it would be wearisome to specify, were instituted; but I believe the most valuable reform to have been the improvement in the method of training troops. Every brigade commander trains and controls his own brigade, and is responsible for keeping it at a high state of efficiency; and the officer who handles the brigade in peace will lead it in the field. The "Kitchener test," by which every battalion in India was subjected to severe examination under service conditions, was much scoffed at, and produced a considerable amount of grumbling, particularly in the native ranks; but after it was all over I never met an officer who did not admit that it had been an excellent expedient, and had revealed such weaknesses as existed. I do not think Lord Kitchener was ever beloved by the Army in India, and probably he did not want to be; but he had the faculty of producing extraordinary devotion among the officers with whom he was most closely in contact, and he was respected and feared by all. He made the Army a first-class fighting machine, and officers who frankly avowed unfavourable prejudices never failed to acknowledge that he had greatly increased its efficiency. When I travelled through India towards the close of his command I never heard a dissentient voice on this point.

That Lord Kitchener made mistakes can scarcely be denied. The proposal for the creation of a limited number

of native field batteries, to be followed by a subsequent expansion of the principle, was the error which obtained most publicity; and it argued a lack of appreciation of an elementary law in the system of Indian defence. His work should, however, be judged not by incidental defects of judgment which were speedily corrected, but rather by its ultimate results. Whenever he went astray, the fault was almost invariably due to a rash precipitation in submitting proposals; and therein was revealed a side of his character as a commander and administrator which is not generally recognised. In one respect Lord Kitchener's sojourn in India did not enhance his reputation. The economy in finance which marked his work in Egypt and the Soudan was not conspicuous in India. The financial statement which he made in his closing address to the Imperial Council left an impression which requires revision in the light of later experience. I say nothing of the complaint, frequently heard, that the Indian Army costs more than it used to do. That is a discovery which is common to all armies; and if the Indian Army costs more, India receives far better value for its money. It may with more justice be said that Lord Kitchener produced his balance-sheet by leaving to his successors the task of making good many omissions. He was too anxious to reproduce the impression he made when he read at the Mansion House the bill for Omdurman. The *Pioneer* of July 7, 1911, remarked: "In spite of the fetish worship of Lord Kitchener, which is now the simple faith of the entire London Press, it is well known that his lordship left a good deal undone, in the way of equipment, for instance, which it is now the care of his successors to supply." Therein lies a tale which is capable of amplification. Lord Kitchener may be a good financial administrator, but he gave few proofs of it in India, and at times he spent very lavishly.

Much has been said about Lord Kitchener's attitude towards the Native Army, but I believe the truth to be this.

When he first took up his command, he did not form a very high opinion of the efficiency of the Indian regiments, and he is not accustomed to conceal his convictions. Again, he was inclined to look askance at some of the methods of the Native Army, which he failed to understand, and thought were pampering. He judged what he saw too much by the standard of his old Soudanese troops. Indians are quicker than Europeans at discerning what is in a man's mind, and the "Kitchener test," which wore out the sepoy's clothes and boots and accoutrements, for which he then had to pay, did the rest. In later years Lord Kitchener saw fit to revise his views about the Native Army, and in the end he became its benefactor. He doubled the kit money of the Indian soldiers, so that they got their outfit free; he enlarged the facilities granted to enable the men to go to their homes on leave without cost to themselves; he gave a boot allowance to unmounted combatants, and free fodder to cavalry on the march; he improved the pension rules, introduced invalid pensions, and made better allowances to native officers on transfer; and finally, he obtained free firewood and a substantial increase of pay for all native ranks. The last concession was announced in King Edward's Proclamation on the completion of fifty years of Crown control in India. The increase of pay was a salutary boon, for it was long overdue, and the cost of living had risen. It helped to assuage any feeling of estrangement, and in the end the native army came to feel that Lord Kitchener had amply befriended them.

I have said little of Lord Curzon in this narration of Lord Kitchener's work in India, and it should be understood that many of the Army reforms were only brought to completion after the close of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. Lord Kitchener's term of office was extended for two years, and he did not hand over charge to his successor, General Sir O'Moore Creagh, until September 1909. In all that he did to improve the efficiency of the Army during Lord Curzon's

Administration, Lord Kitchener had the unswerving support and the warm approval of the Viceroy. The funds he asked for were furnished without stint, and he has more than once borne testimony to the generous sympathy and help which were invariably accorded to him by Lord Curzon. In private life they were on terms of the closest intimacy until the few days immediately preceding the Viceroy's final resignation.

Nor would it be just, in dwelling upon the value of Lord Kitchener's labours, to refrain from pointing out that Lord Curzon himself did much to promote reform in Army administration, particularly before Lord Kitchener appeared upon the scene. His earlier Budget speeches contained long references to the question, and in 1901 he warmly defended a heavy increase in the military estimates. The subject engaged his close and constant attention, and during the four years before Lord Kitchener arrived a steady process of reform was inaugurated. A few facts, which seem to have been forgotten at the moment of Lord Kitchener's retirement, will serve to place the matter in proper perspective, and may also suggest that some reapportionment of recognition is required.

It will be remembered that Lord Kitchener arrived in India in November 1902. The whole of the Native Army had just been rearmed with the new rifle when he took over the command, and the provision of new artillery had been under consideration, the South African War having been one of the causes of the delay. The necessity of decentralisation had been recognised, and a scheme to that end had been drawn up by Sir Edwin Collen, Military Member of Council. The pay of the British troops had been increased. A large number of British officers had been added to the Indian regiments, on the recommendation of Sir Power Palmer, though a still further increase was afterwards made by Lord Kitchener. A system of enumerating animals for transport purposes was inaugurated in 1900.

The provision in the barracks of British troops of punkahs pulled by electricity had been begun at the special instance of the Viceroy, who had been moved to intervene owing to the frequent assaults on punkah coolies. Those who know the trials of an Indian hot weather will realise the beneficence of this innovation, which has done so much for the health and comfort of the troops. Lord Curzon had also perceived the necessity of releasing a larger proportion of the internal garrison for service in the field; and at his request the Mobilisation Committee drew up in 1900 plans which anticipated and embodied the principle which afterwards, upon a larger and more scientific scale, formed a central feature of Lord Kitchener's scheme.

Nearly the whole of the proposals for enabling India to be self-supplying in the matter of munitions of war had been projected, or were partially complete, before the advent of Lord Kitchener. They were instituted by Lord Curzon and his military advisers, and formed part of his policy of making India less dependent upon Great Britain for her defence. The building of the gun-carriage factory at Jubbulpore began in 1901. The cordite factory at Wellington was commenced in 1900. The lyddite-fitting factory at Kirkee was opened in 1901, and the rolling-mills at Ishapore were projected in the same year. The rifle factory at Ishapore was proposed by Sir Edwin Collen in 1900, and was almost complete when Lord Kitchener arrived. The scheme for the gun factory at Ishapore was submitted in the autumn of 1902 by Sir Edmond Elles, who had meanwhile become the Military Member of Council. The Remount Commission was proposed by Sir Edwin Collen, and presented its report in 1901. Other examples might be cited. There was far too little attention to chronological accuracy in the reviews which were published at the close of Lord Kitchener's Indian career.

The greatest service which Lord Curzon rendered to the Empire, on the military side of his Administration, has been

unduly obscured. He sent to South Africa the force of over 8000 British officers and men which held Ladysmith, saved Natal, and stopped the tide of Boer invasion. The promptitude with which the force was despatched was largely due to his own personal intervention. At an early stage after hostilities had broken out he offered to send a further force of 10,000 native cavalry and infantry, but the offer was refused, because, as Mr. Balfour afterwards stated, it was desirable to employ only British troops. The decision of the Prime Minister is now recognised to have been right, and Lord Curzon never questioned its expediency; but he was moved to make the offer because he had received urgent appeals from the Indian princes and the Indian Army, and deemed it his duty to transmit them. At a later date it devolved upon him to express the thanks of the Queen-Empress Victoria for the loyalty thus displayed. The magnificent light cavalry of India would have found on the South African veld exactly the kind of country in which their prowess could best have been displayed; but the reluctance to utilise its services caused no resentment in India, where the racial difficulty was fully appreciated.

During the same period Lord Curzon sent to North China, for the operations which followed the Boxer rebellion, 1300 British officers and men, nearly 20,000 native troops, and 17,000 native followers. Part of this force remained in China for a long time. The ammunition supplies forwarded from India for these two wars included 21,000,000 rounds of ammunition and 114,000 projectiles and shells, 11,000 tents, 11,000 sets of saddlery, 315,000 helmets, 169,000 blankets, 290,000 pairs of boots, 42,000 tons of fodder and rations, and 940,000 garments of various descriptions. These articles were not required either wholly or mainly for the Indian forces, but were ordered for all the troops in the field, and the whole of them were manufactured in India. There were also sent 11,600 horses, 6700 mules and ponies, and 2700 bullocks. India further participated in

minor campaigns in Somaliland, Jubaland, and elsewhere; and the figures I have quoted give some measure of the value of the Indian Empire in the scheme of Imperial defence.

One military reform introduced by Lord Curzon has a very immediate interest. He regulated and extended the principle of granting direct commissions in the Native Army to the sons of Indian gentlemen. The opportunities of military employment provided for the Imperial Cadets have been already explained in a previous chapter. Lord Curzon saw, however, the desirability of making military careers easier of access for those young men who, while not eligible by birth for admission to the Imperial Cadet Corps, are nevertheless members of the Indian aristocracy. The Indian officers of the Native Army had been hitherto chiefly promoted from the ranks, and therefore did not usually receive commissions until they had reached somewhat mature years. The number of direct commissions was comparatively few. In 1900 Lord Curzon decided that a fixed proportion of direct commissions might be granted, in the infantry at the rate of one to every four commissions from the ranks, and in the cavalry at the rate of one to three. In 1902 he began to grant a certain number of direct commissions to Indian gentlemen from selected colleges.

It is understood that a further large extension of the principle of direct commissions is now in contemplation. Until the nature of the scheme is made public, it cannot very well be discussed. It may be said, however, that it appears to involve the consideration of two important points. The first is whether, if a large additional number of direct commissions are to be granted, the Indian officers so created are to have the same *status*, or a higher *status* than, officers promoted from the ranks. The second is whether Indian officers are to enjoy the same rates of pay and pension as British officers, in accordance with the principle adopted for Indian members of the Covenanted Civil Service. If a large number of officers drawn from a new class are admitted to

the Native Army, such a demand will assuredly arise. To meet it would involve a heavy additional expenditure; but no doubt these difficulties will be duly considered before the scheme is promulgated.

II. THE MILITARY DEPARTMENT

I turn with reluctance to the episode which involved Lord Curzon in prolonged controversy with the Home Government and with Lord Kitchener, and eventually left him with no alternative but to submit his resignation. It is one of those controversies which can only be fully described and pronounced upon when everybody concerned has passed away. The issues it raised have, for good or evil, been settled and carried into practice. The antagonisms it aroused between many public men have been dissipated, and no longer affect personal relations in public or private life. They are not, perhaps, forgotten, but the recollection has ceased to be more than a painful memory which is growing dim. It is no part of my purpose to revive the poignancy of wounds that have healed, even though the scars remain. The general object of this book, so far as it relates to Lord Curzon, its central figure, is not to reopen a closed dispute, but rather to direct attention to other phases of his work in India which that dispute has been allowed to overshadow. Some account of the controversy is, however, imperative, or the picture would be incomplete. In what I have to say, I shall rely almost solely on the facts and documents already publicly recorded. I shall deal with the broad outlines, and eschew the masses of detailed argument which have been marshalled on either side. I cannot profess to approach the question, for the purposes of this book, with an open mind, for my mind was made up long ago, and my convictions have remained unshaken after examining the issue afresh; but I will endeavour to state it fairly.

At the time that Lord Kitchener became Commander-in-Chief, the responsibility for the military administration of India was divided between two officers. The first was the Commander-in-Chief, who was styled "His Excellency," and had precedence of the Lieutenant-Governors. He was the executive head of the Army, and was charged with its organisation and training, its mobilisation for war and its direction in time of war, and with promotion. His office was known as Army Headquarters. The second was the Military Member of Council, who was the head of the Military Department. His Department was entrusted with the control of the departments of supply and transport, ordnance, remounts, clothing, medical stores, military works, and military finance, and, above all, with the preparation of the Military Budget. The Military Member was invariably a soldier of high rank, but his department was regarded as a civil department, and he had nothing to do with discipline or training. The one was an executive officer, the other administrative. The multifarious and comprehensive duties of the Commander-in-Chief were believed to be more than sufficient to occupy his time. Mr. Brodrick quite unconsciously furnished the strongest possible argument in this respect when he pointed out in 1909 that no one else in the world, who is not a Sovereign, commands an Army, as the Commander-in-Chief in India does, of over 200,000 men.

Both the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Member were members of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The various departments of the Administration in India are each in charge of a Minister. Each Minister is a member of the Viceroy's Council, which is practically a Cabinet. The Viceroy and the Members of Council are collectively described as the Governor-General of India in Council; in other words, they form the Government of India. The supreme military authority in India is neither the Viceroy nor the Commander-in-Chief, but the Governor-General in Council, in whom is vested by the Crown "the superin-

tendence, direction, and control of the whole Civil and Military Government of all our territories and revenues in India." It is most important to understand that in military questions in India the Government as a whole are paramount, and not any single member thereof. Upon that principle the whole constitutional issue turned.

The Commander-in-Chief was the first military adviser to the Viceroy, and had access to him at all times. The Military Member was a second or alternative adviser, and was further the constitutional representative of the Government of India to whom expenditure proposals were first submitted. When the Commander-in-Chief wished to make any proposal for reform or for expenditure, he submitted it to the Government of India. The practice was that he sent it to the Military Department, where the Military Member recorded his opinion. If expenditure was involved, the proposal went next to the Finance Department, where it was also noted upon. In either case, after being noted upon by one or both of these Departments, the proposal went to the Viceroy. If the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Member were in general agreement, the proposal was adopted. If there were differences of opinion, it was either referred back for further consideration, or circulated to every member of the Council, and decided by vote after debate.

The system was really devised to serve two main purposes. The first was to provide an expert check upon military expenditure, by far the largest single item in the Indian Budget. The second was to provide the Viceroy and his Council with an independent military adviser; for otherwise they would have been at the mercy of the Commander-in-Chief. The Military Member was expected to ensure continuity of administration. He was further supposed to watch specially over the interests of the Native Army, when the Commander-in-Chief happened to be an officer with little Indian experience. In the case of Lord

Kitchener, it may be mentioned that at the time he assumed command his whole knowledge of India was derived from a week or two spent at some Delhi manœuvres many years before. As to the importance of providing the Government of India with a second military opinion, the views of Lord Roberts may be quoted. He said:

"The Commander-in-Chief is the military adviser of the Viceroy on all matters connected with the Army; but whether he is the adviser on military policy would depend, I imagine, on his personal character, and his knowledge of the country and the people. A Commander-in-Chief strange to India, without any acquaintance with the inhabitants, and with only a very general idea of our position in India, both as regards external and internal affairs, would be a very unsafe adviser, nor, I imagine, would any Viceroy be inclined to depend upon such a man for advice in the matter of military policy."

These words exactly describe Lord Kitchener when he became Commander-in-Chief, yet they were uttered in 1897, long before it seemed possible that they might ever be applied to him. Speaking in the House of Lords on August 1, 1905, Lord Roberts said:

"I have no hesitation in saying that in my opinion it is essential to the security of India that the Viceroy should not be dependent on the advice of a single soldier, however eminent and distinguished he may be. Even if he were an Indian officer and his experience had been entirely Indian, as was the case with myself, I consider it would be advantageous for the Viceroy to have at his side a second adviser not directly connected with the Army. But when the Commander-in-Chief is, as in the present instance, a complete stranger to India, I consider it to be a positive danger to our hold over that country that he should be the only one to advise the Viceroy on military matters. . . . It is essential that the Viceroy should have on his Council an officer—he need not be a great soldier—intimately

acquainted with India, especially with the Native Army, its feelings and its idiosyncrasies."

Lord Lansdowne, in the same debate, expressed the view that the duties of the Commander-in-Chief and Military Member "should not be concentrated in the person of a single officer, however distinguished." Two other ex-Viceroys still alive, Lord Elgin and Lord Ampthill, have signified in varying form their adherence to similar views; while opinions tending to the same conclusion have been recorded by Lord Ripon, Lord Dufferin, and Lord Northbrook, among ex-Viceroys who have passed away. The only Viceregal supporters of the opposite attitude have been Lord Minto, who went to India in the full knowledge of the change that was to be made; and Lord Lytton, who was wont to turn for military advice, not to the Commander-in-Chief nor to the Military Member of his day, but to his Military Secretary, Sir George Pomeroy Colley. At the time the controversy arose, every living ex-Viceroy endorsed the contention that the duty of offering military advice to the Government of India should not be left in the hands of a single individual.

The question of the attitude of the Military Department towards Army Headquarters before Lord Kitchener arrived in India is of considerable importance. The Government of India afterwards brought together a great array of evidence, with the object of showing that the Military Department had never exceeded its proper functions. Many eminent authorities were cited, and many impressive facts were quoted. My own view is that the Department had gradually assumed a place in the administrative machine appreciably in excess of its prescriptive rights. It was not free from the stigma of circumlocutory methods. It had undergone an accretion of power, and was in the habit of taking a generous view of its share of authority. It was not obstructive, as was sometimes alleged, but it was disposed to encroach.

Discussing its working at the time Lord Kitchener landed, and when no one dreamed of the storm which was presently to break, I ventured to say that "it thought more of Budgets than of efficiency"; and I still believe that the statement partly explained the situation. These tendencies had probably become accentuated during the illness of Sir William Lockhart, and the subsequent prolonged tenure of office by Sir Power Palmer, who was admittedly only holding his post for another's convenience. Yet though Lord Roberts had casually hinted at "bitter disappointments," he and others whose testimony is beyond question had declared that there had been no serious differences between the two branches of the military administration in recent years. The working of the system really depended upon the personalities of the men holding the two offices. An unassertive Military Member would be prone to give way to an imperious Commander-in-Chief; and when the Military Member was masterful, and the Commander-in-Chief was indisposed to press his views with vehemence, the reverse occurred. Exactly the same variation is noted from time to time in the relations between a Viceroy and a Secretary of State; but when both the Viceroy and the head of the India Office are peremptory, there is sometimes an explosion.

It has to be observed, on the other hand, that the Commander-in-Chief, in his present form, was almost a new luminary in the Indian firmament. Until 1895 he had only commanded the Bengal Army, and there were separate Commanders-in-Chief for Bombay and Madras. Even Lord Roberts never had either administration or command of the whole Army of India. The Commander-in-Chief was, further, an extraordinary member of the Viceroy's Council, and it was at the option of the Secretary of State whether he was admitted to the Council at all. The Military Member had a seat on the Council by virtue of his office, as part of the Government of India. The abolition of the two Presidency commands in 1895 gave the Commander-in-

Chief an enormous access of authority, and I think it tended to diminish the relative prestige of the Military Member. It is difficult to strike a balance, but if in the seven years following 1895 the Commander-in-Chief had not become an orb of increasing splendour, it was in spite of the fact that he had been endowed with vastly larger powers. He was only under one comprehensive and, as I hold, salutary restraint. He could not order expenditure, except for small sums, without reference to the Military Department; though he could appeal to the Viceroy, and from him to the Council, and even, by an indirect method, to the Secretary of State, if his proposals were overruled. The Commander-in-Chief, in short, had far larger facilities for carrying his proposals than are possessed by most military administrators. Whatever the faults of the Military Department may have been, they should have been met by reform, and not by abolition There was no part of Lord Kitchener's work in India which would have failed to reach completion as a consequence of the continued existence of the Military Department; and he owed far more to its careful scrutiny of his earlier proposals than has ever been acknowledged.

It is admitted that Lord Kitchener came to India determined to destroy the Military Department, although he had no personal knowledge of its working. In his Minute of January 1, 1905, Lord Kitchener stated that "about this time two years ago" he had submitted to the Viceroy a paper advocating "the abolition of dual control." On his own showing, he raised the question when he had been in India four weeks. He went on to say that the Viceroy "wisely considered" that his views would lose much of their weight if put forward at so early a stage, and accordingly he withdrew them. The fact that Lord Kitchener impetuously prejudged the issue upon hearsay evidence is one of the weakest points in his case. He had heard amid the great assemblage of soldiers in South Africa much mordant criticism of the Indian Military Department from officers in

whose judgment he placed reliance. After further inquiries in London, he had decided upon the course he should pursue, and he left England with so many good wishes for the general success of his work in India that he believed he could reckon upon support at home. With characteristic determination, he began the attack the moment he arrived.

I have failed in my brief account of the origin of this controversy if I have not made it clear that behind it there lay a principle of the very gravest moment, not only to India, but still more to Great Britain and the Empire. It embodied an issue which repeatedly recurs in the history of nations, and if the propaganda of many writers gains general acceptance, it is an issue which Great Britain may once more have to decide for herself, as she has done in past centuries. Lord Kitchener was not pursuing any personal animosity, for he had no personal feeling against men he had never seen. He wanted a "free hand" in India; he came to the conclusion that the Military Department would prevent him from having a "free hand"; he embarked upon a course to which he adhered inflexibly, and in the end he triumphed. But what is meant by a "free hand"? Whenever a man attains exceptional eminence in any department of public administration, a demand arises in the Press and on the platform that he may be given a "free hand." In particular, we are constantly implored to place the Army or the Navy under the unfettered control of some single individual who has risen to transitory fame. The "free hand" indicated generally proves, upon inquiry, to imply a complete abandonment of all the checks and safeguards which have been evolved by prolonged experience of constitutional methods. Moreover, it leaves no room for a recurrence of such episodes as the great part played by Lord Barham in compassing the downfall of Napoleon. We are asked to sacrifice our whole administrative system upon the altar of individual ability. But our constitutional system was devised for normal administrators. It cannot

be destroyed out of deference to the ambition or the capacity of one exceptional man, who may have a dozen successors of mediocre type. That way lies, not salvation, but ultimate destruction.

There was, in the opinion of the Indian public at that time, very little in the record of Lord Kitchener to justify the demand advanced in his behalf that a system which had been tested for a century should be rent asunder almost before his baggage was brought ashore. Egypt, be it understood, does not bulk quite so largely in the eyes of India as it does to the public at home. To men who are handling three hundred millions of people, the control of eleven millions seems a minor achievement; and the problems of Egypt, difficult though they are, appear simple beside the extraordinary complexity of Indian affairs. India, too, reflects that many of the officials, from Lord Cromer downwards, who have helped to build up the British control of Egypt, were borrowed from her services; and she is inclined to think that perhaps the men who have conferred the greatest tangible benefits upon Egypt are the Anglo-Indian irrigation engineers. So that, while India gazes with admiration and approval upon the work of the British in Egypt, she contemplates it calmly and with some sense of proportion.

In the same way, the campaigns which led up to the recovery of the Soudan did not possess quite the same glamour beneath an Indian sky. They required tenacity, endurance, and dogged determination; but they did not appear necessarily to imply the possession of superhuman qualities. Again, the protracted duration of the later stages of the South African War did not seem to the eager watchers in India to be beyond the possibility of comparison. I am not seeking to disparage the exploits of a great commander. I am trying to describe a frame of mind, to explain how these things were looked at in India, to make it clear why India was not willing to destroy in a moment its

military system at the bidding of a conqueror who to its fancy seemed to murmur in Biblical phrases of "my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness." There was the additional objection that Lord Kitchener had very little experience as a constitutional administrator. His desire to abolish without delay the existing constitutional checks upon his office seemed to imply an impatience of constitutional control which was in accordance with the reputation that had preceded him. Yet I do not think Lord Kitchener had the least desire, either originally or at any later time, to be literally unconstitutional in his methods of procedure. Distinctions of the kind made no impression on his mind. He wanted undivided control, not for any selfish reason, but because he meant to carry out in his own way the task he conceived to lie before him. To him the issue appeared simple, and considerations which others regarded as imperative were in his view mere idle subtleties. His was an attitude which may perchance be cheaply described as due to "impatience of red-tape"; but the student of history will know otherwise.

The somewhat crude proposals which Lord Kitchener formulated immediately on his arrival were, as I have stated, withdrawn; and though he referred to the issue more than once afterwards, nothing has been disclosed concerning any intervening communications. In the meantime, efforts had been made by the Government of India to meet Lord Kitchener's wishes. In his Minute of February 6, 1905, Lord Curzon described what was done, in the following terms:

"Wherever the existing regulations or practice seemed to raise trivial or unnecessary obstacles, we modified them. We stopped the noting by junior officers in the Military Department upon proposals emanating from the Commander-in-Chief, that was said to be a cause of offence. We transferred the order of all Indian Army Orders from the Military Department to the Commander-in-Chief. We gave him an

officer as Financial Adviser. We are about to transfer to him the executive control of the Supply and Transport Corps. These are only casual illustrations which could easily be multiplied. We have, in fact, endeavoured to facilitate the execution of Lord Kitchener's plans by every means in our power."

Lord Kitchener has acknowledged, however, that his views never varied, in spite of these concessions. It is presumed that he expected to be able to prosecute his attack on the Military Department after Lord Curzon left India, which under ordinary circumstances would have been within a year of his taking over the command; but the extension of office granted to the Viceroy altered his plans. The next step is again recorded by Lord Kitchener, who states in the Minute already quoted that when Lord Curzon was about to proceed to England in April 1904, he gave him "a revised Minute on the same subject," in which he again advocated the abolition of the Military Department. As to what took place while Lord Curzon was in England, I shall only quote two statements. The first was made in the House of Lords on June 28, 1909, by Mr. Brodrick (then Viscount Midleton) who said:

"The question . . . had been discussed with him (Lord Curzon) by the Prime Minister, by Lord Roberts, and by the India Office officials; but so grave was the position that while that question was still being considered here, and while the noble Lord the Viceroy was absent from India, matters reached such a pass at Simla that Lord Kitchener found himself unable to continue the command, and through Lord Ampthill, who was then the Viceroy, he desired me to submit to the King his resignation of the office of Commander-in-Chief."

This was, I think, the first public disclosure of Lord Kitchener's threat of resignation in 1904, which had a very disturbing effect upon the Home Government. The second

statement was made in the House of Lords on August 1, 1905, by the Marquis of Bath, then Under-Secretary for India, who said that "when Lord Curzon was in this country last summer the home authorities were able to consult him on the manner in which the question should be brought up."

It was "brought up," obviously with the concurrence of Lord Curzon, in a despatch from Mr. Brodrick, dated December 2, 1904, which must have reached Calcutta almost simultaneously with the returning Viceroy. In this despatch the Secretary of State requested the Government of India to ascertain whether the two branches of the military administration were working harmoniously, and whether any change was desirable. They were further to furnish the Home Government with the opinions of the Commander-in-Chief and of the Military Member. It can hardly be supposed, however, that the Viceroy concurred in some of the statements of the despatch; for Mr. Brodrick suggested that the weakness of the mobilisation arrangements were due to dual control, whereas they were really due to past financial stringency.

Lord Kitchener lost no time in responding to the invitation of the Home Government. His Minute was ready on New Year's Day, 1905. It was an uncompromising attack upon the whole system of Army administration in India, which he declared to be "faulty, inefficient, and incapable of the expansion necessary for a great war." He described the Military Member as "really omnipotent in military matters," and said that he could prevent the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief from being carried out "even in questions of discipline and training." Peace routine, he maintained, had in India overshadowed preparation for war. The system involved endless delay, and implied want of trust. The two authorities often had divergent opinions, and the compromises arrived at were satisfactory to neither of them. The military head of the Army ought to be responsible for the supply to the troops of transport, re-

mounts, food, clothing, armaments, ammunition and other munitions of war. He denied that under the change he proposed the Commander-in-Chief would acquire too much power, or that the work would be greater than one man could perform efficiently. The existing system meant an unnecessary duplication of work, and why, asked Lord Kitchener, should the Army require two heads, more than any other department? He contended that the Military Member did not safeguard the revenues of the country, because the ordinary military expenditure was strictly limited to a specified sum, and all new expenditure had to be sanctioned by the Viceroy in Council and by the Secretary of State. To the argument that the Viceroy needed an independent military opinion, he replied that the existence of two opinions caused the Army to take sides, which was unsatisfactory, while it brought the Viceroy "into the arena of discussion on contentious military subjects." Finally, he proposed the creation of a War Department, with the Commander-in-Chief at its head under the title of "War Member of Council." The Department was to include a General Staff, Adjutant-General's and Quartermaster-General's Departments, a Director-General of Ordnance, a Financial Secretary nominated by the Finance Department, and a Secretary to Government. The Military Member was to disappear.

Major-General Sir Edmond Elles, the Military Member, an exceptionally able officer, replied to Lord Kitchener in a Minute dated January 24, 1905. It was a noteworthy feature of the question, by the way, that for many years the Military Members invariably had been officers of great distinction and unusual capacity. The names of Sir George Chesney, Sir Henry Brackenbury, Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Neville Chamberlain, Sir Henry Norman, Sir Samuel Browne, Lord Napier of Magdala, and Sir James Outram, have attained a permanent place in British military annals. Sir Edmond Elles held in his Minute that a change of

system was unnecessary, but that a change in the working of the existing system was required. The Commander-in-Chief must, however, be prepared freely and frankly to admit his subordination to the Governor-General in Council, who was the constitutional head of the Army. The defective strength of the Field Army had been due to lack of funds owing to famine, costly expeditions, and loss on exchange. The necessity of increasing the Field Army to eight divisions had been discussed early in 1902, but the question was postponed pending Lord Kitchener's arrival. He denied that the Military Member was omnipotent, or that the system was one of dual control. The Military Member represented the Government of India, and worked upon the delegated authority of the Governor-General in Council. He contended that there had been no undue delays, and that matters of major importance were disposed of quickly. "We have been waiting for some years," Sir Edmond Elles said, "to redistribute the Army and increase the Field Army. We awaited the man and the money." He recorded his deliberate opinion that no Commander-in-Chief could properly control the work of Army Headquarters and of the Military Department. Lord Kitchener might, but not "men of more ordinary capacity with small Indian experience." The comparison with the heads of other departments was fallacious. The Commander-in-Chief was not the head of a revenue-producing, but of the greatest spending department of the State. The system in the military branch was necessarily very different from the purely civil branches. The Commander-in-Chief could disregard the views of his staff officers, but the Secretary of the Military Department was a staff officer of the Viceroy, and could go direct to the Viceroy should he differ from the Military Member. As to financial control, he claimed, and quoted examples to prove, that the financial supervision exercised by the Military Department, quite independently of the Finance Department, was real and effective. As for

Lord Kitchener's scheme, it was a proposal to establish a military autocracy. It was an exact adaptation to Indian conditions of the Army Council at home, but with material differences. The Army Council administered and did not command the Army, but under Lord Kitchener's scheme he would himself combine all administrative and executive duties, a position which found no parallel in any of the armies of the Great Powers. In the Army Council the Secretary of State and Members were all equal and had equal votes; Lord Kitchener would only have subordinates with no vote or right of dissent at all.

In a Minute dated February 5, 1905, the Viceroy proceeded to comment upon the views of Lord Kitchener and Sir Edmond Elles. He discounted the tendency to make comparisons with Continental practice, or to discuss dualism from an abstract standpoint. The Government of India itself was an illustration of the dualism which entered into every branch of British administration, in the respective parts played in it by the Governor-General in Council and the Secretary of State in Council. Lord Kitchener had in the preceding two years carried through a series of reforms that would stamp his name indelibly on the military history of India. His suggestion that he had been hampered and obstructed at every turn was without foundation, for he had received the support of the Council and of the Military Department to a degree without precedent. Lord Kitchener had completely misconceived the constitution of the Government of India. The Military Member did not criticise or accept or refuse the Commander-in-Chief's proposals as an independent military authority, but as the constitutional representative of the Government of India; and the Government of India were by law invested with the supreme control of military affairs. Lord Kitchener's proposal was in reality not to disestablish an individual or even a department, but to subvert the military authority of the Government of India as a whole, and to substitute for it a

military autocracy in the person of the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Kitchener's reference to other departments appeared to rest upon a misunderstanding of the essential difference between civil and military affairs. The Home Member, for example, was practically subjected to multiple control, but discipline in the military branch was entirely different, and meant in a peculiar degree the subordination of private judgment to higher authority. Under the new scheme the anxiety and labours of the Viceroy would be immensely aggravated. Upon him would in practice be thrown the entire brunt of accepting or rejecting the proposals of his principal colleague. Lord Dufferin had said of a similar project that "the Viceroy would be without any adviser save the representative of the Army, who would be more specially interested in pressing proposals involving expenditure or changes in organisation," and "the revenues of the country would be at the mercy of the Commander-in-Chief." Lord Curzon added that he had known instances where the Viceroy had been saved from serious mistakes by having a second military adviser. The chain of subordinate authority proposed by the Commander-in-Chief would not offer any such safeguard. Any reasonable reform or re-adjustment in the present system he would be willing to consider, but no such proposals were before them.

Lord Kitchener penned a curt Minute of Dissent on March 18, 1905. It contained only three paragraphs, offered no reply, and rested on the assertion: "My arguments remain uncontroverted, and are, I believe, incontrovertible." It was sufficiently summed up in the House of Lords by Lord Ripon, who said: "When I turned to Lord Kitchener's Minute, I found no reply at all. I found nothing but a lofty declaration that he would not reply, and that he knew he was quite right."

The Government of India reviewed the four documents in a powerful despatch to the Secretary of State, dated March 28, 1905. They remarked that whatever charges

could be brought against the existing system, that of extravagance could not possibly be sustained. On the contrary, it was one of the sources of complaint that the financial control was sometimes thought to be over-rigid and exacting. Stress was, however, laid upon the fact that Lord Kitchener's redistribution scheme, involving a heavy outlay, had been most readily financed. The salient passages of the despatch were these:

"We say deliberately that we should regard with positive dismay any change that would in any degree dethrone the Government of India from their constitutional control of the Indian Army, or set up a single Commander in their place. We doubt if a military command of such overwhelming authority would be tolerated in any country unused to dictatorship, and we think that in India it would be peculiarly dangerous. . . .

"We cannot too strongly or emphatically express our conviction that the Military Member is an essential element in the Government of India. . . . His Majesty's Government may be invited to consider the position that would be produced in England if a Commander-in-Chief of the British Army possessed a seat in the Cabinet, if he were the sole representative of the Army there, if he enjoyed the power and rank of the Secretary of State for War in addition, and if His Majesty's Ministers were called upon to accept or reject his proposals with no independent or qualified opinion to assist them. And yet this is precisely the situation which we are asked to accept by Lord Kitchener in India. . . .

"Where a recommendation from the head of the Army is not now accepted, at least this is only done upon competent advice, and after exhaustive examination by specially selected officers possessing professional knowledge. Under Lord Kitchener's scheme these guarantees for free and impartial discussion would have disappeared, expert criticism would already have been eliminated before the Government of India were approached, and the latter, ignorant of military matters, would be left to accept or reject military proposals in the dark. . . .

"We are unhesitatingly opposed to the destruction of a system which has worked well for nearly half a century, which has earned the approval of a succession of the most distinguished Military Commanders, and which we believe to be entirely reconcilable even with the altered conditions and the higher standards of the present day. Still more do we dissent from the creation in its place of an organisation to which no parallel exists, so far as we know, in any Army or any Administration in the world."

The despatch was signed by every member of the Government of India, and Lord Kitchener was the sole dissentient. Therein, as Lord Curzon conceived it, lay the strength of his position. It did not seem possible that the Cabinet would jettison, not only the Viceroy, but the whole Government of India, at the instance of the Commander-in-Chief.

I should not now be inclined to endorse without reserve the contents of any of the five documents I have quoted. Lord Kitchener's Minute showed a complete failure to appreciate the constitutional aspects of the question; his further Minute of Dissent was contemptuous, because he declined to answer a single argument, although he had initiated the discussion, and by all the laws of administrative usage he was bound to reply. The three papers which collectively presented the case for the Government of India were too uncompromising. They did not admit the existence of a solitary defect, and left no opening for arrangement. No modified scheme of reform was proposed. It is true that the Viceroy and Sir Edmond Elles expressed general willingness to consider any reasonable reform, but the expression became almost meaningless when compared with the rest of their vigorous denunciation. They could well plead, however, that the example of extreme vigour in disputation was set by Lord Kitchener. His case was manifestly overstated, which cannot be alleged in the same degree against his opponents.

The scene was then shifted to London, and for several

weeks India heard nothing about the question. The general public in India had, in fact, very little knowledge of the heat which had been generated in high quarters. There were rumours of grave differences, but the Press was silent. Meanwhile the Secretary of State, early in May, convened a special committee upon the question, from which a sub-committee was afterwards appointed. The sub-committee consisted of Sir Arthur Godley, Lord Roberts, Sir James Mackay, Sir John Gordon, Sir Edward Law, and Sir E. Stedman, while the remaining members of the committee were Sir George White, the Marquis of Salisbury, and the Secretary of State. I shall make no comment upon the composition of the committee. A peculiar feature of its proceedings was that they were kept secret, the plea afterwards advanced being that the committee was "departmental." The fact that it had been convened at all was not disclosed until after Lord Curzon had resigned.

It is convenient, however, to mention the proceedings of these two committees in chronological order. The sub-committee did not adopt Lord Kitchener's proposals in their entirety. It recommended the transformation of the Military Department into a Department of Military Supply, and the limitation of the Military Member to the control of Army contracts, the purchase of stores, ordnance, remounts, military works, clothing, and the medical and marine services. It was of opinion that neither the Military Member nor his department should have the power to veto any proposal put forward by the Commander-in-Chief, but that such power should rest exclusively with the Governor-General in Council. The Military Member should be the adviser of the Governor-General in Council "on questions of general policy, as distinct from purely military questions"—a very ambiguous distinction.

The general committee reported that it had sought advice from Lord Elgin, Lord Cromer, Sir Henry Brackenbury, Sir David Barbour, Sir Edwin Collen, and others, but

it conspicuously omitted to disclose the nature of the advice it had received. It declared that the position of the Commander-in-Chief in the official hierarchy was anomalous, and that the Military Member had in recent years tended more and more to become an expert adviser rather than a civil administrator. It held that the Military Department had "recently formed the habit of giving authoritatively an independent opinion upon purely military questions." At the same time it said that it could not doubt "that the concentration of the whole responsibility of Supply of the Army under one head, if that head is to be the Commander-in-Chief, would be opposed to all modern principles in regard to armies." It concluded by expressing general concurrence with the recommendations of the sub-committee. Lord Roberts stated in 1909 that in committee he "strongly opposed the abolition of the Military Member." Lord Lansdowne stated on the same occasion that the committee "was unanimous in favour of retaining in some shape or form a Military Member of the Council."

Mr. Brodrick proceeded to draft a despatch, which was dated May 31. It reached Simla on June 18, and was published with the other documents already dealt with in a special *Gazette of India* on June 28. In effect it embodied the recommendations of the committee and sub-committee, though it never mentioned the existence of those bodies. It directed that the Commander-in-Chief's Department should be called the Army Department, and that a Chief of the Staff should be created for the assistance of the Commander-in-Chief. The Secretary of State peremptorily ordered that the whole of the prescribed changes should be brought into operation on October 1.

It is not easy, even now, to convey an impression of the extraordinary sensation produced in India by the publication of these despatches. At first the public were almost unable to believe that the most powerful Viceroy whom India had known for many years, and the entire Government of India,

had been not only condemned, but as it seemed openly humiliated, at the instance of the Commander-in-Chief. That was the grievous mistake of the Home Government. Had Lord Kitchener been a thousand times right, the Cabinet should never have suffered the Viceroy to be overthrown in the broad light of day. People unacquainted with India have little conception of the enormous importance to British rule of the maintenance of the authority and prestige of the Viceroy and the Government of India. The Viceroy is much more than the embodiment upon the spot of the power of Parliament. He is much more than the "agent" of the Secretary of State, as Lord Morley permitted Mr. Montagu contemptuously to describe him. He is first of all the accredited representative of the King-Emperor, the officer who holds authority from the absent Sovereign, who dispenses honours and privileges in the Sovereign's name; and the people of India, who reck little of Parliaments, regard him chiefly in the light of his relations with the Crown, the only symbol of union which they willingly acknowledge. They look always to the Viceroy, and never to the Commander-in-Chief. The publication of these despatches, and the decision they disclosed, inflicted a grave blow upon the prestige of the Viceroyalty, from which it will not soon recover. The consequences have been accentuated since by the steadfast and reiterated efforts of Lord Morley to exalt, at the expense of the Viceroyalty, the office of the Secretary of State, whose duties and functions he magnified unduly. It should be a cardinal rule of the Administration of India never to suffer the authority of the Viceroy in Council to be publicly minimised or impaired.

In this instance the effect of the shock was heightened by the tone of the despatch of the Secretary of State. Whatever may be the merits of Mr. Brodrick as an administrator, he was never at his best when he took pen in hand. Lord Ripon, who was by no means an unkindly critic, said that no such despatch had been addressed to the Government

of India since Lord Ellenborough sent to Lord Canning his famous despatch about the affairs of Oudh. That literary effort, it may be remembered, was regarded in England as so reprehensible that its publication at once brought about Lord Ellenborough's political downfall, and nearly involved the Ministry in ruin. I am disposed to say now that Mr. Brodrick's despatch was perhaps too severely condemned at the time, and to believe that its author was honestly unconscious that it would give dire offence; but certainly it was not calculated to promote peace. It was written from the point of view of an advocate, and not of a judge; it criticised the Viceroy in a manner foreign to the measured pronouncements of a Secretary of State, but took no single exception to the contentions of Lord Kitchener; and it practically ignored the larger constitutional considerations on which the case of the Government of India was based. Its gravest defect was, not only that it was in several respects misleading—I do not say intentionally so—but that it ordered the Government of India to put into execution without delay an entirely new scheme which they were not even expected to consider; and this was the point which helped to determine the attitude of the public and the Press in India. The Supply Department was not Lord Kitchener's scheme, nor the Government of India's scheme; it was the invention of Mr. Brodrick and his committee. The motive may be acknowledged; it was an attempt to build a bridge and to force its acceptance without discussion. But the bridge was a sham. Every one knew that the Supply Department was a flimsy substitute, that it would not endure, that Lord Kitchener had won an overwhelming victory, and that the Home Government had discarded the wholesome principle of civil supremacy in the Indian Administration. There was little surprise when it became known on June 27 that the Viceroy had tendered his resignation.

I pause to say a word upon the attitude of the Home

Government, about which many hard things were said at the time. To India, where the Government of India were almost unanimously supported—Lord Kitchener had very few sincere adherents outside his own staff during that eventful summer—it seemed as though the Cabinet had rejected the unanswerable case of the Government of India simply because they feared the effect upon public opinion at home if they permitted Lord Kitchener to resign, as he had more than once threatened to do. It was known that the Ministry were losing ground, and that any serious agitation might bring about their defeat. Such an agitation would unquestionably have arisen if Lord Kitchener, the chosen hero of the crowd, had suddenly appeared in England in the guise of a foiled reformer. There can be no doubt that fear of such a consequence weighed heavily with the Home Government, and may very well have tipped the scale in their decision.

Yet it would be an injustice, in the light of later knowledge, to suggest that they were influenced solely, or even primarily, by the urgent necessity for self-preservation. It is almost the only point on which I shall permit myself to make statements which are not based upon the public records. There is now every reason to believe that Mr. Balfour's Government held strong and sincere views upon the merits of the issue, and gave their decision in accordance with those views. It is understood that Mr. Balfour himself had given the question careful and anxious attention, that he had acquainted himself with many of its bearings at least a year before the decision was made, and that he had arrived at a conclusion from which he never swerved. Mr. Brodrick had for years taken a special interest in Army problems, he had been at the War Office, and his sympathies were naturally enlisted in behalf of Lord Kitchener's contentions. Lord Lansdowne was an ex-Viceroy, he thought the Viceroy needed a second military adviser, he believed that the Military Supply Member would serve that end, and he

was in any case eager for compromise. Of the larger constitutional issue, of the effect of the decision upon the Viceregal office, of the disregard of the fundamental principle of civil supremacy, the Home Government appeared to be oblivious. But though their judgment may be deplored, and though they were greatly and unwisely influenced by extraneous considerations, I do not think their sincerity can now be impugned.

After a few days it was stated in India that the Viceroy's resignation was in suspense pending the consideration of certain proposed modifications in the Secretary of State's scheme. These modifications are described in a telegram from the Government of India dated July 6, 1905. Their principal feature was a suggestion that the new Supply Member "should be available for official consultation by the Viceroy on all military questions without distinction, and not only upon questions of general policy, or when cases are marked for Council." It was further proposed that all important changes in military organisation, or in conditions of service of all ranks, or in customs affecting the Native Army, which might be proposed by either Military Department, should be discussed by the Mobilisation Committee or some equivalent body. In a telegram dated July 14, the Secretary of State accepted these proposals, while pointing out that neither of the Military Members of Council could have any special claim to be consulted or to note on the proposals of the other. Lord Kitchener concurred in the telegrams thus exchanged. Mr. Brodrick incidentally claimed that the recommendations of the Government of India were in accordance with his despatch of May 31, but this was not the case, for in that despatch it had been decided that the Commander-in-Chief should be the sole expert adviser of the Government on "purely military questions." The compromise was a poor one, but it was held to suffice. Lord Kitchener's scheme remained intact, but a notable concession had been gained, though its value

was dependent upon the selection of the new Member, which now became a matter of much importance.

Lord Curzon's resignation was thus averted, and on July 18 he announced in the Legislative Council the nature of the modifications which had been made. His speech was restrained and colourless, and in India, where the full text was immediately published in accordance with custom, surprise was expressed at its remarkable moderation. There was only one expression to which exception might be taken. Lord Curzon said that the Government of India might be pardoned "if they were somewhat surprised at the manner in which it had been thought necessary to convey these orders." The phrase had best have been left unspoken, but allowance must be made for the surrounding circumstances, and for the unusual position in which the Government of India found themselves. They had been roughly ordered to adopt a scheme in the preparation of which they were not consulted. At the close of the speech, after explaining the modifications for which he had thought it necessary to ask, Lord Curzon alluded to "the prerogative which was conceded to the Government of India as far back as three-quarters of a century ago." The allusion was perfectly natural and seemly. The Charter Act of 1833 states, as I have already pointed out, that "the superintendence, direction, and control of the whole civil and military government" of India is vested in the Governor-General in Council.

The whole controversy then appeared to be at an end. The battle was over, and there was nothing more to be said. The country learned with absolute bewilderment two days later that the speech which had seemed so studiously uncritical, which had implied no recalcitrance or opposition, which had loyally accepted without reserve the decision of the Home Government, was being made the subject of angry condemnation in the House of Commons and in the English Press. What had happened was that a news agency had telegraphed to England for publication a sentence or

two from the opening of the speech, and a few sentences from the close. Read without their context, they produced an impression exactly contrary from what was intended. The news agency was not to blame. Such episodes will occur continually until the British Empire realises that an essential condition of Imperial unity is the further cheapening of telegraphic rates. When telegrams can be sent to any country of the Empire as cheaply as within each of its component parts, more will have been done to bind the Empire together than can ever be accomplished by any scheme of inter-Imperial trade. I have known more than one distinguished career almost ruined through the accident of an unduly condensed Press telegram. On this occasion the result was serious. Sir Henry Fowler used expressions in the House of Commons which left unfortunate misconceptions in the public mind. The Secretary of State imperiously directed that the full text of the speech should be telegraphed *en clair*. This was duly done, but the misleading impression which had been created was never removed, and it helped to exacerbate feeling in the closing stages of the controversy.

For the trouble was not over. On July 17, the day before he made his speech in the Legislative Council, the Viceroy had telegraphed to the Secretary of State recommending as first Military Supply Member, Major-General Sir Edmund Barrow, a distinguished officer who had formerly served in the Military Department. He had stated that General Barrow "would be acceptable both to Lord Kitchener and myself." Mr. Brodrick, in replying by telegram on August 1, said that the Cabinet were not willing to appoint General Barrow. He recognised General Barrow's great capacity, but was advised that this would find more appropriate scope in the Frontier command or as Chief of the Staff. He added: "I hope to telegraph you very shortly the name of the officer we propose for Military Supply Department."

Lord Curzon responded in a telegram dated August 2. He said it must be evident that he could only inaugurate the new system with the aid of a military colleague in whose experience, judgment, and ability he had the fullest confidence. If the Military Supply Member was to give general military advice to the Governor-General in Council, as decided by His Majesty's Government, and explicitly reaffirmed by Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords on the previous day, he should be an officer of the highest position and qualifications. In these circumstances the Viceroy might reasonably expect, firstly, that he should be allowed to suggest the officer whom he considered best qualified for these purposes, and secondly, that in the absence of any strong reasons to the contrary, his suggestion should be favourably entertained. The Secretary of State had assigned no definite reason, but spoke of having received other advice. Surely the person most competent to advise as to a member of the Viceregal Council was the Viceroy himself? General Barrow's name was submitted with the full knowledge of Lord Kitchener, and if any contrary advice had reached the Secretary of State, he could not accept its validity.

On August 4, Mr. Brodrick telegraphed that he had consulted the Cabinet again. They could not favour "the selection of an officer who from the positions he had previously held could hardly be expected to inaugurate the new system with an open mind." He did not gather that Lord Kitchener recommended General Barrow, but that he knew of the Viceroy's intention to recommend him. His military advisers thought that the Military Supply Member should have some technical experience, as he would be in charge of the manufacturing departments. Mr. Brodrick continued: "Will you consult Lord Kitchener as to who in his opinion is the best man for the post, and let me have his views?" The Government "must avoid any appointment which would in their opinion tend to reproduce previous difficulties."

Lord Curzon next day telegraphed that Lord Kitchener did not consider it any part of the duty of the Commander-in-Chief to recommend to the Secretary of State a member of the Viceregal Council. It was apparent that the Home Government attached a fundamentally different interpretation from himself to the modifications accepted on July 14, upon the acceptance of which alone he consented to remain in office. The chief point of those modifications was that the Supply Member should not merely be a surveyor of stores, but that he should be qualified to give advice on questions of general military policy. He continued:

"You now propose to reject General Barrow, who possesses these qualifications in an exceptional degree; you suspect him of not possessing an open mind because he formerly served in Military Department, although you were willing to offer his services to Lord Kitchener as Chief of the Staff, and you plainly indicate the type of officer whom you desire, by stating that he should be chosen for technical experience of military stores and supplies, an experience which could not be expected to constitute him a qualified military adviser of Government of India on general question, but which General Barrow among his many attainments happens also to possess in an unusual degree. Position is therefore, in principle, almost exactly where it was when I resigned in June, and the main conditions which caused me to resign on that occasion have again been called into being."

Lord Curzon closed his message by stating that the only conditions upon which he could carry out the policy of His Majesty's Government were that he should receive their support and be allowed the co-operation of the officer whom he considered best qualified for the purpose. If the Government were unable to accept his representation, he respectfully requested the Prime Minister to place his resignation at once in the hands of His Majesty the King.

Three days later, on August 8, Mr. Balfour made an

unavailing attempt to heal the breach. He telegraphed: "His Majesty's Government have received your telegram with extreme regret. With every desire to meet your wishes they are unable to understand your position, and earnestly desire you to reconsider it." He continued that the duty of advising the King on the choice of Members of Council rested solely with the Secretary of State, and should not degenerate into a merely formal submission of the views and recommendations of the Viceroy. He deprecated the choice of General Barrow.

I may interpolate the remark that from the moment the Viceroy was ordered to "consult Lord Kitchener," all talk of the Secretary of State's prerogative became a mere quibble. It was not enough that the Viceroy was defeated; he was expected to go cap in hand to the victor to inquire his pleasure. Yet when he submitted a name himself he was reminded of the Secretary of State's prerogative.

Lord Curzon replied once more in a telegram dated August 10, which was perhaps the most important of the series. He explained that his object in proposing the modifications which had been accepted was that the Government of India should possess a second military adviser who should have a charge befitting his position and responsibilities. Hence it followed that the Military Supply Department should be a substantial department of Government, and that the Member should possess the requisite authority and qualifications. The proposals of the Commander-in-Chief for carrying out the orders of the Secretary of State were now before him (they had just been submitted). He analysed them in his telegram, and said it was estimated that the Supply Member would not have two hours' work a day. All military power would be concentrated in the hands of Army Headquarters; the proposals were indistinguishable from Lord Kitchener's original scheme, which had been rejected by the Home Government; and they were wholly inconsistent with the conception of the functions of the

Supply Member to which he had referred. In these circumstances the creation of the Supply Member would involve an unpardonable waste of public money, and it would be better to dispense with the department altogether. If the Commander-in-Chief's point of view was to prevail, it was useless for him to remain in India, since he could not frame a scheme in accordance with it. If, on the other hand, he was desired to pursue the matter, he must again ask for an assurance of continuous support from the Government, and more particularly he should need the future co-operation of a colleague as Military Supply Member whom he knew and could trust. He had asked for General Barrow, not with the least idea of encroaching upon the constitutional prerogative of the Secretary of State, but because he was the only officer known to him who possessed the requisite qualifications.

Special stress must be laid on this telegram of August 10, which makes one point very clear. It is commonly supposed, and sometimes stated in print, that Lord Curzon finally resigned on the personal question raised concerning General Barrow; but that was only the nominal reason. The successive telegraphic despatches show quite plainly that he resigned because he perceived that the modifications for which he had struggled were being rendered worthless, that his second military adviser was meant to be a lay figure, and that the Supply Department was to be far more an empty shell than he had expected. In the telegram of August 10 he demonstrated conclusively that the new department, as then conceived by Lord Kitchener, was a mere travesty, and that the Government of India were really brought back to the proposal with which the Commander-in-Chief had confronted them on New Year's Day. That his contentions were absolutely correct was proved by the total extinction of the new department in less than three years. Lord Kitchener assisted at its inglorious obsequies some months before he left India. It is difficult to believe that this vital explanatory telegram of August 10, which threw so much

light on Lord Curzon's position, ever received due consideration at the hands of a Government which was perhaps growing weary of the strife in India. The Court of Directors would not read the despatches of Sir Stamford Raffles, and so we lost Java. One wonders how much attention was given to the despatch of August 10, 1905.

The Parliamentary paper discloses two facts. One is that the Secretary of State replied within twenty-four hours, on August 11. The other is that he took the extraordinary course of completely ignoring the vital considerations set forth at great length in the telegram of August 10. He made not the slightest allusion to the new department, or to Lord Kitchener's proposals concerning its limitations. He said he had laid the views contained in the telegram of August 10 before the Cabinet, and reiterated his former general statements and his objection to General Barrow, adding that the Government apprehended "no difficulty in arriving at a thoroughly workable conclusion." There was evidently a good deal of unconscious truth in the Prime Minister's statement that the Government were "unable to understand" the Viceroy's position.

On August 12 Lord Curzon finally took the only course which, as I conceive it, was left open to him, He telegraphed to the Secretary of State that the main question was not one of the choice of an individual, but of the principles underlying the change in the Indian Administration. He had repeatedly pressed for a clear intimation of the views of the Government, but had failed to receive either the information or the assurance which he sought. He continued:

"I am reluctantly driven to the conclusion that the policy of His Majesty's Government differs fundamentally from what I thought had been agreed upon with the Government of India, and is based upon principles which I could not conscientiously carry into execution. In these circumstances my ability to act with advantage as head of

the Indian Government has ceased to exist, and I beg you again to place my resignation in Prime Minister's hands. In interests of new organisation, which I am now powerless to introduce, it is desirable that I should be relieved of my duties with as little delay as possible."

Mr. Balfour sent to the Viceroy on August 16 a telegram, manifestly written with the deepest sorrow, in which he said:

"We hoped that principles underlying proposed change in Military Administration had been made clear in despatch of May 31, as well as in other communications; that no assurances were required to prove the desire of His Majesty's Government to give you all the support necessary to carry this change into effect; and that in any case assurances had been explicitly given.

"But if after all that has passed you still reiterate your request to be relieved of your office, I know not how to combat further what I take to be a fixed resolve, and have, therefore, with the profoundest regrets, communicated your wishes to the King.—A. J. Balfour."

The Viceroy's resignation was announced in India on the night of August 20.

I have felt constrained, in dealing with the episode which began with the suggestion of the name of General Barrow, to adhere scrupulously to the telegrams published in the Parliamentary paper, and to base the few comments I have made solely upon the contents of those telegrams. It must be manifest that they do not tell the whole story, and that the attitude and motives, not only of Lord Curzon, but also of the other persons concerned, are left in some obscurity. Much remains unexplained; for instance, the misunderstanding about Lord Kitchener's original concurrence regarding the nomination of General Barrow. Yet I think the narrative should end there, even at the risk of further misconception, for it is impossible to discuss the matter in

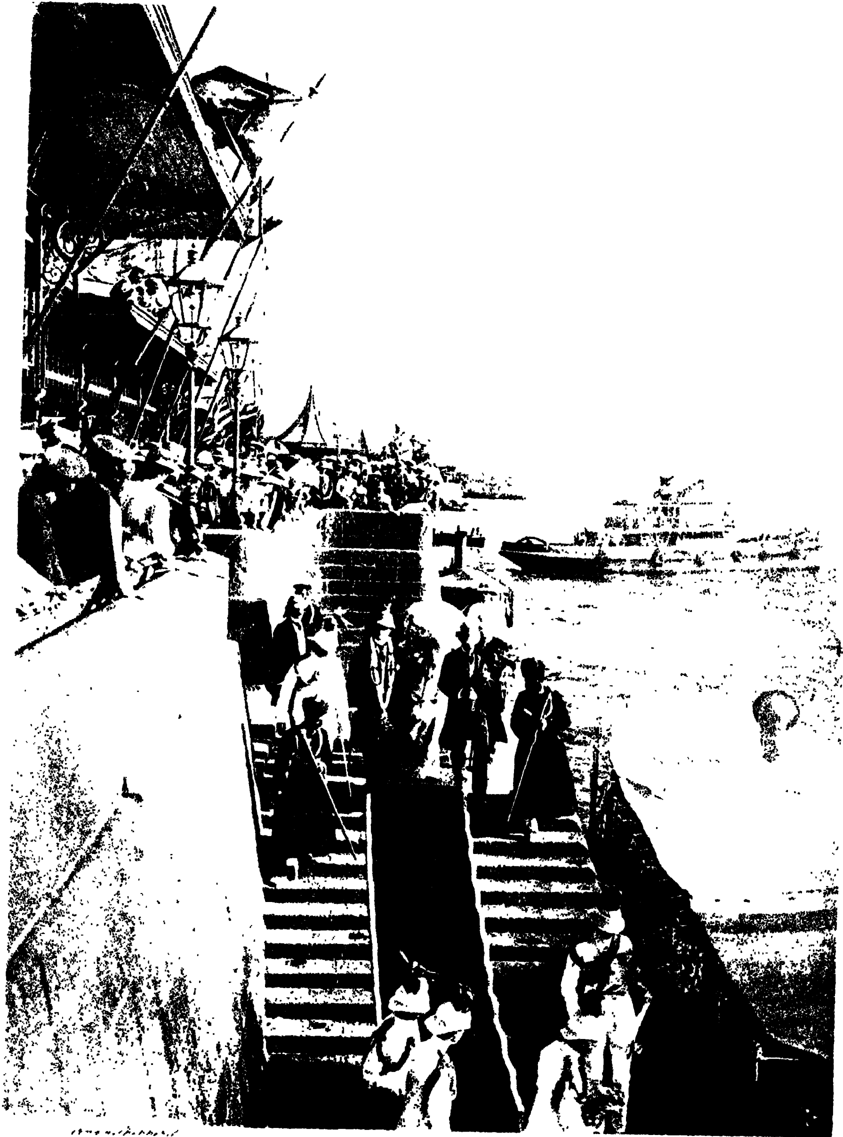
greater detail without incurring the danger of reawakening disputation, which it is my chief purpose to avoid. I will only note that the abrupt suggestion contained in the Secretary of State's telegram of August 4 that the Viceroy should "consult Lord Kitchener" was severely commented upon in India, though afterwards defended by the Prime Minister.

For the same reason, the remaining incidents will be dismissed in the fewest possible words. Mr. Brodrick sent to the Viceroy on August 16 a long telegram expressing regret at his resignation. In the chapter on "The Two Bengals" I have already mentioned the only passage in that telegram on which I intend to comment. Lord Kitchener dissented from the definition of his proposals regarding the new department contained in the Viceroy's telegram of August 10. He wrote a memorandum on the subject, to which Lord Curzon replied. The Viceroy's Note was more than an answer; it was an absolute demolition, for almost without comment he substantiated every statement he had made by quotation from the Commander-in-Chief's own papers. Lord Kitchener pressed for publication of his memorandum without being aware of the nature of the Viceroy's reply. Lord Curzon demurred, but referred Lord Kitchener's request to the Secretary of State, who authorised publication. The result of the appearance of the papers was that public opinion in India, already greatly in favour of the Viceroy, was immensely strengthened; but a cruel additional consequence was that the English Press, in ignorance that the papers were issued upon Lord Kitchener's urgent solicitation, condemned the Viceroy for continuing the controversy in public.

Lord Curzon remained in India for three months after his resignation was announced, and did not sail until November 18, 1905. The reason why he stayed so long was that it was thought desirable that he should receive the Prince and Princess of Wales before his departure. In

the meantime the tide of popular sympathy in India continued spontaneously to rise in his support, until at the end it became overwhelming. At the farewell dinner at the Byculla Club, Bombay, on November 16, he said:

"I need say but few words about my resignation or the causes that led to it. I desire only to mention one cause that did not. It seems to have been thought in some quarters at home that this was a personal quarrel, and that I resigned on personal grounds. No one who has the least acquaintance with the facts of the case, and I would fain hope no one who has any acquaintance with myself, could commit this error. The post of Viceroy of India is not one which any man fit to hold it would resign for any but the strongest reasons. When you remember that to me it was the dream of my childhood, the fulfilled ambition of my manhood, and my highest conception of duty to the State, when further you remember that I was filling it for the second time, a distinction which I valued much less for the compliment than for the opportunity afforded to me of completing the work to which I had given all the best of my life, you may judge whether I should be likely heedlessly or impulsively to lay it down. No, sir, there is not a man in this room who does not know that I resigned for a great principle, or rather for two great principles, firstly, the hitherto uncontested, the essential, and in the long run the indestructible subordination of military to civil authority in the administration of all well-conducted states, and, secondly, the payment of due and becoming regard to Indian authority in determining India's needs. I am making no vain boast when I say that in defending these principles as I have sought to do, and in sacrificing my position sooner than sacrifice them, I have behind me the whole of the Civil Services in India, the unanimous weight of non-official English opinion in this country, an overpowering preponderance of Indian opinion, and I will add, which is more significant still, the support of the greater part of the Indian Army. I have not one word to say in derogation of those who may hold opposite views; but, speaking for the last time as Viceroy of India, I am entitled to say why in a



The Last Moment.

few hours I shall cease to be Viceroy of India; and I am also entitled to point out that, in speaking for the last time as Viceroy of the country which I have administered for nearly seven years, I am speaking, as I believe that no single one of my predecessors has ever been able to do to a similar extent, with the whole of that country behind me."

There was not a word in that passage which was not strictly true. Lord Curzon had been defeated, but he left India with the honours of a conqueror. The reference to the Army was afterwards deprecated in some quarters, but no one, in India or in England, denied that it was completely accurate at the time it was uttered.

The new Viceroy and Lady Minto publicly bade farewell to Lord and Lady Curzon on November 18 on the Apollo Bunder at Bombay, the scene of so many historic welcomes and leave-takings; but the echoes of the guns which announced Lord Minto's arrival in Calcutta had scarcely died away when a telegram arrived from Mr. Brodrick directing him to prepare the new rules required for the impending change in Army Administration. It must have been one of the last messages Mr. Brodrick sent as Secretary of State for India; for on December 4 Mr. Balfour tendered to the King the resignation of the Ministry. Mr. Brodrick departed from the India Office, and Mr. John Morley reigned in his stead. The situation thus produced was piquant. Mr. Morley was by instinct and predilection probably the very last man on either side of the House of Commons who was likely willingly to endorse any change savouring of the subversion of civil supremacy by the military authorities. Less than three months earlier, in addressing his constituents at Arbroath, he had expressed his opinion upon the Indian dispute in no measured terms, as follows:

"Lord Curzon has been chased out of power by the military, and the Secretary of State has sanctioned that

operation. If there is one principle more than another that has been accepted in this country since the day when Charles I. lost his head, it is this—that the civil power shall be supreme over the military power. That is what you will find in the India Office, that they have been guilty of this great dereliction, this great departure from those standard maxims of public administration which had been practically sacred in this island ever since the days of the Civil War."

These were good Ironside sentiments, and the public in India and in England waited with much curiosity to see what Mr. Morley would do.

Lord Minto telegraphed his proposed revision of rules on January 23, 1906. He was in complete accord with Lord Kitchener, for which he cannot be criticised, because he went to India fully understanding what he was to do. He had three supporters in his Council, the Commander-in-Chief, the new Supply Member (Major-General Scott), and the Finance Member (Mr., now Sir Edward, Baker). The four dissenting members were Sir Arundel Arundel, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Sir Erle Richards, and Sir John Hewett. They had all signed the despatch of March 23, 1905, as had Mr. Baker also, though in the meantime Mr. Baker's views had undergone some modification. The opinion of the dissenting members was thus summarised:

"They object to intended amalgamation of Army Headquarters Staff with the Government of India's Secretariat. They hold strongly that, if the control of Government over the Army and its head is to be a reality, it is essential to keep the functions of the Commander-in-Chief as Executive Head of the Army entirely distinct from his functions as Member of Council in charge of Army Department, and entitled in that capacity to pass orders in the name and with the authority of the Government of India, and that the agencies through which these two distinct classes of functions are respectively exercised should be kept separate."

The dissenting members further objected to the position assigned to the Secretary in the Army Department, which differed from that of all other Secretaries to Government, because much of the business would only reach him after orders had been approved for signature. Lord Curzon had taken the same objection in his Note on Lord Kitchener's proposed rules, written after his resignation. He had said that the Secretary would be reduced to "a mere signing machine," and that the result would be to create a new type of Secretary to Government unknown in the Indian constitutional system, with inferior powers and responsibilities.

It should be explained that Secretaries to Government are an important feature of the Indian system. Each department is in charge of a Member of Council, but at its head are one or more Secretaries, whose position corresponds roughly to that of the high permanent officials in England. Such business of the Department as goes to the Viceroy for approval is usually submitted personally by the Secretary, and not by the Member. If the Secretary differs on any point from his Minister, he has the right to state his views to the Viceroy at his weekly interview. Whether the Secretary avails himself of the privilege depends very much on his personal strength of character; but the Secretary in the Army Department is a military officer, with special instincts of discipline, and I should say that it would take a very strong officer—lacking the prestige of a Member of Council—to differ very much from the Commander-in-Chief, to whom he may be looking for further promotion. In this case the Secretary in the Army Department, as originally conceived, did not even possess the ordinary powers of a Secretary to Government. That was the reason of the protest of the dissenting members; but it was only an incidental point, as was also the other point quoted; and neither point had anything to do with the main issue of the original controversy.

Mr. Morley disposed of the whole question in a despatch dated February 9, 1906. He said no more about King Charles's head, but accepted the general scheme of his predecessors, and authorised the creation of the phantom Department of Military Supply. The reason assigned was that the new Government did not think it wise to reopen the question, "at the risk of an indefinite prolongation of fruitless and injurious controversy." Mr. Morley made two important modifications to meet the views of the dissenting members. He insisted that the Secretary in the Army Department should have proper powers, and not be an automaton; and he devised alterations in the rules which tended to limit the amalgamation of the Army Headquarters Staff with the Government of India Secretariat. It was significant of the persistent failure of the English Press to understand the bearings of a highly technical question, that these modifications were promptly hailed by the newspapers of both parties as a master-stroke of compromise, which had settled the whole controversy. They had nothing to do with the main issue. They did not affect the new Supply Department at all. They were wise and prudent, Mr. Morley is to be commended for having made them, and they still endure; but they did not prevent the destruction of a constitutional system.

Looking back, it is difficult to see how Mr. Morley and the new Cabinet could have come to any other decision. The real responsibility was not theirs. The question had been settled by their predecessors. Had they reopened the whole controversy, they would have been confronted at once with the resignation, not only of a Commander-in-Chief, but probably of a Viceroy also. While the embers of disputation were still smouldering, it was easy to confront Mr. Morley with his own speeches, to quote his own books against him, to tell him in the words of one of his own most celebrated essays, as I fear I did, that he had allowed "the little prudences of the hour . . . to obscure the persistent

laws of things." Yet it is hardly possible to discern now how he could have done otherwise. That he chose his course very cheerfully appears improbable. The whole tone of his despatch seems to imply a certain reluctance. Without the slightest knowledge on the subject, I prefer to believe that if Mr. Morley had entered the India Office a year earlier, this chapter of Indian history would never have been written.

The sequel was precisely what had been foreseen. Three years later, in March 1909, the Supply Department was abolished, and the Supply Member vanished from the Viceroy's Council. The very situation which Mr. Brodrick's own committee had said would be "opposed to all modern principles in regard to armies" had been evolved. Lord Kitchener remained the sole representative of the military authorities, and Lord Curzon's predictions were verified. It is no answer to say that the revolutionary results anticipated have not come to pass. The pathway to mischief has been made. The military system of India is no longer controlled upon a constitutional basis. When we get a combination of a headstrong Commander-in-Chief and a weak and vacillating Viceroy, when India is plunged in the midst of war's alarms, as she may be some day, we shall have cause to rue the work of 1905. No one ever suggested that under Lord Kitchener the new system would not be worked with prudence; Lord Curzon repeatedly disclaimed such an implication. The battle was fought to prevent the destruction of a normal constitutional system to meet the demands of a single exceptional individual.

It will be an evil day for England if such a battle is ever fought and won within these shores.

XIII

UNREST AND KINDRED QUESTIONS

The question of unrest in India brings into view an issue directly connected with the subject dealt with at the close of the preceding chapter. I have reserved it for separate treatment in order to avoid confusion. The position created by the settlement of the military question has been discussed chiefly in relation to a possible external war; but far more was really at stake. India has been plunged into fierce internal strife during our rule; we hope such an event may never recur, but we cannot feel entirely confident that there may not again be trouble, at some distant date, within our Indian Empire. Should India ever see another red dawn, we may have further cause to regret that we have deliberately, and by our own act, subverted the wholesome principle of complete civil supremacy in the Indian Administration. It was not alone the band of heroes clinging tenaciously to the little Ridge at Delhi who saved our Indian Empire. Far more than to their gallant deeds, we owe its final salvation, under Providence, to the strong and steadfast clemency of Canning. Even should India lapse once more into tumult, the basis of its Administration should continue to be civil, or we may never save British rule. It was of these things that we were thinking in India during that distressing summer when our countrymen in England saw nothing but the conflict between two determined men, the one uncompromising, the other tenacious. It was no foolish jealousy of a distinguished soldier which prompted the opposition his

proposals encountered; it was the consciousness that vital constitutional principles, of which he was oblivious, were at stake, and required defence until the last possible blow could be struck.

I thrust aside all technicalities, all the misleading talk of possible safeguards, and state that the decision of the Home Government gave an unconstitutional bias to the Indian Administration from which it will not recover until amendment is made. Powers which exist are certain to make themselves felt, even if they are not definitely used, and purely military opinion is liable to come to count too much in the framing of Indian policy. The question slumbers now; the powers are in abeyance. One reason is that the present Cabinet, whatever its faults may be, can be trusted to prevent any undue exercise of military influence in India. But Ministries change, and we may not always have a Government so prudent in this respect; administrators of India change, and we may not always have a Viceroy and a Commander-in-Chief so cautious in the exercise of their respective functions as the present holders of those offices; and meanwhile the dangerous principle of exalting the military power at the expense of the civil authorities has been accepted and is at work.

I fear that what I write regarding this matter will fall upon deaf ears. It is almost impossible to obtain a fair hearing in England to-day upon an Indian question which is of fundamental importance. The public either profess weariness of an issue which they are unwilling to investigate, or they ascribe vulgar personal predilections or personal antipathies, or—and this is by far the most common and the most dangerous attitude—they reveal a completely wrong conception of the basis upon which the Indian Empire is founded. The last-named defect of thought is visible in every grade of society, from the highest to the lowest. England is bemused with the drugs of a sham Imperialism. The popular tendency is to contemplate India from the

point of view of a sergeant-major. Many of the ablest men among us, when they think of India at all, think of it as an Empire which we are holding by bayonets rather than by the merits of our rule. Yet never before in the world's history have 75,000 white troops essayed the almost incredible task of keeping in check over 300,000,000 of people; and they do not do it by bayonets alone, as so many in England have unwisely come to believe.

It was not in pursuance of this mock and arrogant Imperialism that Lord Curzon toiled in India, that Lord Milner fought his lonely fight in South Africa, that Lord Cromer built a new Egypt out of the remnants of the old. They were quick to strike where necessary, alert to repress disorder, strong to guard their great charges, but they did not work to the sound of kettledrums. They were Imperialists, it is true, but theirs was another and a finer Imperialism, which had for its object the creation of great nations upon firm and enduring foundations, the uplifting of myriads to a happier and a nobler level, the spread of justice and liberty, the evolution of a loftier manhood. They caught glimpses of a vision which was hidden from most of their countrymen at home. They laboured, not in pride, but in humility. For the pride that boasted of Empire but forgot its true basis, for the kettledrum pride, one had to turn to England.

The greatest danger to the Indian Empire to-day lies not in India, but in the debased Imperialism which has obtained an unhappy vogue in this country. It finds its chief expression in views about India. The thought that won widespread sympathy for Lord Kitchener, and secured for him support in quarters where the real issue was disregarded, was the thought defined by the statement that he would "show these people we mean business." It was a thought that did great injustice to his character, as his future work in Egypt will probably reveal; for he knows Orientals thoroughly, and is liked by them, and he has done

other things in his life besides watching the dawn of Armageddon from a hill-side before Omdurman. When protests were raised against the proposal that Lord Kitchener should be sent back to India as Viceroy, no personal implication was involved; the protests were made against the popular theory that it was necessary to send him back in jack-boots. Until the British public realise that India has reached a stage of development when it can no longer be dragooned into blind obedience, we shall never see a proper comprehension of Indian problems. When trouble comes, if it ever does come, it is not the Anglo-Indians who will require restraining; the difficulty will be to soothe popular opinion and to restrain the clamour for premature reprisals in England.

It is these considerations which make it so difficult for one who has lived long in India to write about unrest for English readers. Writer and readers approach the subject from two entirely different standpoints. When those who think as I do have written about the inactivity of the Government in recent years, it is not troops or bayonets that we have had in mind. We have written of the paralysis of the civil power, of the inefficiency of the administration of justice, of the reluctance to deal by civil process with the forces of anarchy and disorder. We do not call for "martial law and no damned nonsense"; that is the kind of thing one hears in England; we urge the prompt and inflexible exercise of the civil law. When we condemn the Home Government for binding in chains the hands of the executive in India, we do not want to see guns trained upon Poona or Calcutta; we want to prevent the results which we know will flow from an unwillingness to deal firmly with crime in an Oriental country. During all the troubled period from which India has now emerged, the great Anglo-Indian newspapers, the *Pioneer* and the *Statesman*, the *Times of India* and the *Madras Mail*, remained perfectly calm. The bulk of the Anglo-Indian Press—there may have been one or two

unfortunate exceptions—neither published inflammatory articles nor called for undue and invidious reprisals. It would have been well if their attitude had been emulated elsewhere.

When I first designed this book, it was my intention to enter at length into the origin of Indian unrest; but I am spared that necessity by the exhaustive analysis published in 1910 by Mr. Valentine Chirol, with whose conclusions I am in general agreement. The only difference I would express is that while endorsing his exposition of local conditions, I think larger stress should have been laid upon the general revolt against European domination, against the whole impact of Western civilisation, which was and is visible throughout Asia. That revolt had a reflex influence upon India, and incidentally brought to a head maleficent intrigues which had been long at work. Again, I should perhaps be inclined to state the case against Brahminism rather differently. Brahmins were only in the front of the movement against British control because from time immemorial they have been the intellectuals of India, and some among them were bound to become the leaders in a propaganda which, whatever we may think of it, was directed by brains. What distinguishes the Indian movement from similar movements in other countries was that in India the brains were in the background.

That Anarchism has disappeared from India cannot be expected, but I think there is good reason to believe that its power has been for the present broken. I have seen too many prophecies fail in the last few years to indulge in the risks of political vaticination; but I will quote from a speech made by Mr. Gokhale in the Imperial Council on March 20, 1911. He was speaking directly after certain political murders had occurred, and said:

"My Lord, let not the Government be influenced too much by the latest outrages. They are like the dying embers of a

fire that is going out. A number of young men came under unfortunate influences under circumstances upon which I will not dwell, and the responsibility for which must be shared equally between the Government and the people. There is much truth in the adage that it takes two to make a quarrel. I am not, however, going into that; I only want to say that for three or four years a wave of wild teaching passed over the land, and under the influence of that teaching a number of youths completely lost their heads and committed themselves to courses of conduct from which retreat was not easy. I think it is some of these men who are still responsible for these outrages. There may be a few more outrages in the near future—no one can say—but no new additions to the ranks of these men are taking place; the supplies have been cut off; and I feel quite sure that the situation will now grow better and better every day until at last only the memory of these times is left."

With some misgivings, I can only hope that Mr. Gokhale's estimate of the position is correct. The wave may have spent itself, but the duty of the Government remains unabated. Only by unceasing vigilance, and by the swift exercise of their powers upon occasion, can they check the reappearance of tendencies which loyal Indians regard with just abhorrence.

I assume it is not necessary to defend Lord Curzon from the charge of having contributed to bring about the appearance of Anarchism in India, though I believe there was a time when he was even credited with having in some undiscernible manner impelled the mild Hindu to start making bombs. The secret history of the Anarchist movement is now tolerably well known to the authorities; and the people who brought these wild charges had probably never heard of the assassination of the Dravids, the informers against Chapekar, the Poona murderer, in days when Lord Curzon was still a member of the House of Commons. I am not even sure that it is worth while to deal with the more frequent accusation that he was responsible for the

larger phenomena of unrest, as distinguished from Anarchism, which have disturbed India during the last few years. In being called upon to face such a charge, and to endure all the virulent attacks and the heated misrepresentation which have flowed from it, he has only had to share the common lot of nearly every administrator who serves a European country overseas. If he had not foreseen that, like many of his predecessors, he must pass through that particular vale of tribulation, he would have studied history to little profit.

The three greatest Colonial Empires have been those of England, France, and Spain, and all three have treated the men who have carried and upheld their flag in distant lands with singular ingratitude. None has offended worse than England, which delights in splendid verse of Empire, and forgets the men who made it possible. Every statesman who goes to India or South Africa goes at the risk of his reputation and his happiness. The men who stay at home risk nothing but periodical worry; their worst mistakes are condoned; but the men who fare forth across the seas risk all. If they do nothing at all, they may perhaps count upon applause and effusive commonplaces on their return; if they strive manfully to fulfil their appointed task, they are almost certain to encounter at some stage or other the bitterest hostility. It is a topic curious enough to make one pause and look backward for one brief moment.

All through the centuries the story is the same. History contains few more touching pictures than that of Columbus dying in poverty in the inn at Valladolid, after vainly pleading with his ungrateful king for a restitution of his rights and dignities. Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico, came back from the Pacific to die with the unmerited affronts of the monarch for whom he had won vast provinces still ringing in his ear. Dupleix, who sought to win India for France, wrote only three days before his death in the utmost indigence: "I have sacrificed my youth, my fortune, my life, to enrich my nation in Asia. . . . My services are

regarded as fables, my demand is denounced as ridiculous, I am treated as the vilest of mankind." La Bourdonnais, the founder of French power in the Isle of France, was rewarded for his zeal by a long imprisonment which broke his heart. Lally, the splendid soldier who endeavoured to retrieve the fallen fortunes of France in India, was dragged through the streets of Paris in a dung-cart to the scaffold. Jules Ferry, who conceived the idea of a new French colonial empire, was, in the words of M. Etienne, "treated as a public malefactor, and in spite of the service he rendered to his country, he lost his popularity, his tranquillity, and almost his life." The history of England has been equally full of instances of unrequited services ever since the days when Raleigh came back from the Orinoco to die by the headsman's axe. Clive, called upon to defend himself like a criminal; Hastings, ruined in fortune by an unfair trial lasting for years; Stamford Raffles, hampered throughout his career by unworthy opposition; Dalhousie, dying in proud silence beneath a black cloud of calumny which has only been removed after a lapse of fifty years; Canning, whose work was so little understood that his name was very nearly excluded from the vote of thanks to the Indian Services offered by Parliament after the Mutiny; Bartle Frere, sacrificed to the requirements of political expediency; so the long tale goes on. Even Waterloo did not protect the windows of the Duke of Wellington.

Lord Curzon was happily spared the mournful fate of some earlier proconsuls, but although we do not cut off the heads of our overseas statesmen nowadays, or impeach them by way of acknowledgment, we are still far too ready to think the worst of them instead of the best. Because after Lord Curzon's departure from India there was a widespread manifestation of unrest, many of his countrymen jumped to the conclusion that for the symptoms of disturbance he must be held responsible. The real causes of unrest in India—I am not now alluding to Anarchism—had no more connection

with the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon than they had with the moon. They sprang from that quickening of new aspirations which swept throughout Asia as a result of the victories of Japan; and on their better side Lord Minto was quite justified in considering them to be healthy. Their more violent and ebullient side was another matter, to be dealt with as the law directs.

I have shown that for the first few years of his Viceroyalty Lord Curzon enjoyed a popularity such as few Viceroys have ever known. Two minor incidents which caused some excitement, the Official Secrets Act and a homily on truth delivered in the Calcutta Convocation, hardly require discussion. The one was a routine measure which has never, so far as I am aware, adversely affected a single Indian journalist; the other was a speech which was possibly injudicious in its choice of a subject, though certainly not in its method of treatment. No one can read it now without smiling at the thought that it could ever have created any hubbub. Neither of these incidents, which are probably almost forgotten, could have produced either boycotts or mass meetings in Beadon Square.

The two larger episodes which aroused agitation were the Universities Act and the partition of Bengal, and I have already named them as two of the greatest and most beneficent achievements of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. I have never known any agitation quite so absurd as the agitation against the partition of Bengal. It was almost as ridiculous as the outburst of the English populace when the calendar was reformed, and the cry went up, "Give us back our eleven days!" Except among the vested interests which considered themselves menaced, it was never more than a pretext, and any other pretext would have served just as well. For the rest, it was the outcome of the suddenly conceived desire to create a Bengali "nation," of the hostility to the Universities Act, of the search for a vent for the excitement engendered by the conflict in the Far East, of

that craving for passionate controversy which periodically afflicts Bengal far more than any province in India. Few cared about the actual partition itself. The very agitators who once led excited mobs through the streets of Calcutta are now on the verge of pronouncing benedictions upon it, though I do not doubt that their confession of faith will be immediately preceded by vehement protestations on the other side of the controversy, as is their habit. The subject may well be dismissed, as it has been discreetly dismissed in India.

I prefer to recall, by way of comparison, a demonstration which occurred in Calcutta in March 1905, on Lady Curzon's return from England after her serious illness. It was months after the agitation against partition had begun. The Viceregal train broke down while crossing India, and knowing the generous reception that was awaiting them, the Viceroy and Lady Curzon raced to the capital with an engine and a single carriage, at sixty miles an hour, rather than disappoint the populace. The Calcutta Corporation met them at the railway station, and presented Lady Curzon with a valuable jewel subscribed for by the members. Howrah Bridge and the streets of the city had been voluntarily decorated by a Bengali committee. There were no regular troops, by the Viceroy's special order, though the Calcutta Light Horse Volunteers insisted on turning out in full strength to furnish an escort. The whole of the route was packed with dense crowds, the cheering was continuous, and Lady Curzon drove to Government House amid acclamations such as had never then been accorded to any woman in India. Hundreds of the ladies of Calcutta were awaiting her in the Throne Room, and presented her with a costly carved ivory casket and address. One of the local newspapers said that it was "the occasion of a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the population of Calcutta, such as we never remember to have witnessed before." Such was India, in the very year of Lord Curzon's

departure; warm-hearted, emotional, a land full of contradictions, with a people normally reserved, but given equally to outbursts of the strongest enthusiasm and the most exaggerated condemnation. Lord Curzon said on landing for the second time: "There is warmth of heart in India as great and life-giving as there is of sky." Nowhere is the quality more manifest than in Bengal; and memories such as I have quoted remain fragrant and precious when all the riots and the boycotts are forgotten.

The subject of Lord Curzon's supposed connection with the appearance of unrest in India is not one upon which I care to dwell further. Even his own countrymen, some among whom were quick to give ear to the voice of slander on his return, have now come to realise the injustice that has been done. I will recapitulate in a few sentences all I have said on the point. The Universities Act aroused deep hostility; the partition of Bengal was made the pretext for wild agitation; but both were justifiable and necessary measures. The very firmness of Lord Curzon's control, his vigorous work in strengthening the foundations of British supremacy, may possibly have tended, as I said in my opening chapter, to stimulate that irreconcilable residuum of the Indian peoples which desires our departure; though personally I doubt whether the influence of his labours at all accelerated a movement which was secretly in existence long before he became Viceroy. But though the measures I have mentioned were made the objects of persistent and even violent opposition, they had no more to do with the general appearance of unrest in India than had the creation of the North-West Frontier Province. Other provinces cared nothing about the partition. The general unrest was due to causes which may be described as continental. The best refutation, already explained, is that in the controversy about military administration at the end of his Viceroyalty, Lord Curzon carried the whole country with him.

It has often been complained against Lord Curzon that

while he instilled new strength into British rule, he did nothing to satisfy the aspirations of Indians for a larger share in the control of their own affairs. The complaint is quite legitimate, and is entitled to an answer. The particular work which Lord Curzon went to India to do did not include an enlargement of liberties, such as has now been granted. It was a work which presented many more difficulties than he had anticipated; he undertook many reforms which he had never originally contemplated; and during the whole of his second period of office he was intermittently engaged in a serious conflict which could not have been foreseen. Had he been able to complete the full term he had projected, had his pathway been peaceful towards the end, it is my belief, and that of men who were intimately associated with his Viceroyalty, that he would have come to realise the desirability of rounding off his labours by some substantial concession to the aspirations of educated Indians. It would have been the natural and proper coping-stone of his work. He was a Viceroy who was intensely conscious of external opinion. He might not always follow it, but no man was more ready to listen to external views. I could name instance after instance where his proposals were modified out of deference to popular sentiment and unofficial desires. Though he never seems to have seriously contemplated any concessions of the kind I have named, I think he would have done so had he completed his full term, had his second period been less stormy, and had he been less preoccupied. The times were ripe for such an advance, and he was always quick to note the trend of popular feeling.

Just as it fell to Lord Curzon's lot to reap where Lord Lansdowne had sown, and Lord Elgin had watched and waited, so it fell to the lot of Lord Morley and Lord Minto to complete the work Lord Curzon had perforce left undone. Their series of reforms did not represent a reaction from the spirit of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty; they were its natural and inevitable complement. There was no spirit of essential

antagonism between the two Administrations; there was no broad feature of Lord Curzon's policy which Lord Minto did not accept and carry forward, with the full approval of Lord Morley; but they added the one ingredient necessary to make the work of Lord Curzon finally acceptable to the people.

On the whole, it was a fortunate chance which brought Lord Morley to the India Office at that particular juncture. With several aspects of his policy I am unable to agree, and have said so in due season; but happily, for my present purpose, it is only necessary to dwell upon matters which do not admit of difference. Lord Morley did for the India Office what Mr. Chamberlain did for the Colonial Office; he showed that to be at the head of so great a department was no unworthy crowning of a statesman's career. Unusual qualifications were needed to discern aright the remedies required by the Indian situation in 1906; and Lord Morley brought to the task the broad and sympathetic perceptions, the keen intuitive insight, which in his legislative capacity were imperative to success. For five years India had the benefit of the guardianship and direction of one who added to the ripe wisdom of the statesman the profound knowledge of the scholar, and the warmest sympathy with human striving after progress; and when Lord Morley left the India Office the verdict of supporter and opponent alike was that he had been the greatest Indian Secretary of State of modern times. The advent into Indian affairs of such a dominant personality, with so exceptional a reputation, necessarily tended, although to some extent involuntarily, to overshadow the Viceroy. Lord Minto did not display, and was not expected to display, the intense activity which Lord Curzon had exercised throughout his Administration; but he had two qualities which were of inestimable service during a very troubled period. Upon all the problems which came before him he brought to bear shrewd and penetrating common sense, much practical experience, and a

certain immovable strength of will; and during years which would have severely tried the nerves of a weaker man, he showed an incomparable calmness which no untoward event could disturb.

That Lord Minto came to quite independent conclusions about the necessity for some enlargement of liberties, and that he pointed them out very early in his Viceroyalty, is now common knowledge; that he worked loyally to make the scheme a success, and refused to abandon it when confronted by sinister occurrences, are facts equally well known; but that the larger inspiration, the broader conception, the final shaping, the tenacious adherence in the face of much criticism, were all chiefly the work of Lord Morley, is too obvious to need emphasis.

For the purpose of record, the reforms may be briefly summarised. They were divided into two sections, one relating to the Executive Councils, and the other to the Legislative Councils. The innovations regarding Executive Councils were:

(1) The appointment of an Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

(2) The appointment of one Indian member to the Executive Councils of the Governors of Madras and Bombay.

(3) The provision of powers to constitute an Executive Council for the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the presumption being that one member of such Council would be an Indian.

(4) The provision of powers to create Executive Councils for the Lieutenant-Governors of other provinces, though in these cases the proposal must first be laid before Parliament for sixty days.

(5) To these reforms may be added the appointment of two Indians to the Council of the Secretary of State, commonly known as the India Council.

These were all fundamental changes, for they admitted

Indians to the highest executive appointments, and gave them access to the most secret and vital deliberations of the Administration, from which they had been hitherto excluded. The changes in the Legislative Councils were:

The Imperial Legislative Council was increased from twenty-one to a maximum of sixty.

The Madras and Bombay Legislative Councils were increased from twenty-four to a maximum of fifty.

The Bengal Legislative Council was increased from twenty to fifty, and the Councils of the United Provinces and of Eastern Bengal from sixteen to fifty.

The Punjab Legislative Council was increased from eight to thirty.

The Burma Legislative Council was increased from ten to thirty.

Taken as a whole, the Councils now include no fewer than 135 elected members, as against thirty-nine under the old Act. Their total maximum strength is now 370, as against 189 formerly. By a reasonable compromise, and by the adoption of varying expedients in different provinces, the Mahomedans have been given an adequate share of representation upon all the Councils. In the Imperial Council the official majority was retained at the instance of Lord Morley, though Lord Minto was willing to abandon it; but in the Provincial Councils the official majority was not preserved. In practice the non-official members do not necessarily vote against the Government upon crucial questions, and the support of Europeans and the more moderate Indian members can frequently be reckoned upon. The President of each Council retains the right of veto, and behind lies the veto of the Viceroy. The privileges of non-official members have also been greatly enlarged, and the rules of procedure very much modified. They can exercise a greater influence in the early stages of Budgets, the right of interpellation has been strengthened, facilities for the fuller and freer discussion of public policy have been pro-

vided, and the privilege of introducing resolutions and Bills (under sanction) has been conferred upon private members.

Though the appointment of Indian members to Executive Councils was strongly opposed, there was never any strenuous opposition to the enlargement either of the Imperial or the Provincial Legislative Councils. It was never contemplated by Lord Lansdowne, who in 1892 introduced a larger non-elective element into the Councils, recognised the elective principle, and conferred the right of interpellation, that the reforms he carried should be regarded as at all final in character. The time had come when some measure of extension could with safety be introduced, and it was being urgently claimed. The late King-Emperor, in his Proclamation of 1908, wisely said that "the politic satisfaction of such a claim will strengthen, not impair, existing authority and power."

The enlargement of the Councils is probably the feature of the reforms which at present is most appreciated in India. The new bodies have been a great success, and the debates in the Imperial Council are already not unworthy of older and more famous assemblies. The reforms are certainly no more final than were those of 1892, and in due course there will doubtless be further developments. Meanwhile the loyal Indian communities have the satisfaction of knowing that they can at least make their voices audibly and effectively heard. The real tests of the reforms have still to come. They will come in the Imperial Council when the Indian members demand, as they have a right to do, that they shall have some voice in settling the fiscal policy of India; they will come in the Executive Councils when a popular demand arises that the Indian appointments shall be filled, not by quiet "safe" men, but by prominent politicians who will claim their share of executive authority. That day has not yet arrived, and in any case I am not at all sure that men of the stamp of Mr. Gokhale will not feel that for many years to come they will be serving their country better from an

independent seat in the Council than from an executive chair.

One other aspect of the reforms requires comment. They rightly satisfy the aspirations of the intellectuals and the men of property, but they leave the bulk of the people practically untouched. Lord Curzon concisely expressed the point in the House of Lords on February 23, 1909, when he said:

"I wonder how these changes will, in the last resort, affect the great mass of the people of India—the people who have no vote and who have scarcely a voice? Remember that to these people, who form the bulk of the population of India, representative government and electoral institutions are nothing whatever. . . . The good government that appeals to them is the government which protects them from the rapacious money-lender and landlord, from the local *vakil*, and all the other sharks in human disguise which prey upon these unhappy people. I have a misgiving that this class will not fare much better under these changes than they do now. At any rate I see no place for them in these enlarged Councils which are to be created, and I am under the strong opinion that as government in India becomes more and more Parliamentary—as will be the inevitable result—so it will become less paternal and less beneficent to the poorer classes of the population."

I cannot leave the subject of unrest and the remedies adopted without mentioning the pernicious practice of government from hill-stations, which is one of the greatest hindrances to the success of British rule in India. I believe it to be bad in principle, and to be responsible to a very considerable extent for such loss of grip as is visible in the Indian Administration. If Calcutta had been under the restraining influence of a resident Government, the city would never have got so far out of hand as it did a few years ago. One of the few things which reconciles me to the continuance of the autocratic control of a Secretary of State

is the knowledge that this grave problem will never be settled until it is tackled from Whitehall. Not a single administrator in India will ever touch it. From the youngest civilian and the most newly arrived Governor to the retiring member of Council, all unite solidly in defence of the migration to the hills. It is extraordinary what an amount of heat can be generated in India at short notice by attacking the practice of spending many months of the year at hill-stations. Eminent civilians will listen unmoved to the strongest criticism of any feature of their administration; say a word against hill-stations, and in a moment their hair bristles, and they are banging the table with their fists. Even Lord Curzon fell under the spell; he was not certain that hill-stations were necessary for the Provincial Governments, but he was quite sure that in the case of the Government of India, "for law, administration and the rest, Simla's best." Yet I have never met any man, Englishman or Indian, outside the Services, who did not declare that the hill-stations were largely to blame for the growing detachment of the British from the people of India.

It ought to be possible to discuss the question without making unworthy imputations on either side. In the cities it is said that Government servants in the hills are engrossed by golf, and bridge, and picnics; in the hills it is alleged that the business men in the cities waste half the afternoon gossiping in their clubs, and are always down listening to the band in time to catch the first cool breath of the evening breeze. Neither allegation is true. Business men in India have little time to loiter nowadays. Native competition grows keener every year, and the margin of profit is far smaller than it used to be. The clubs and restaurants of Calcutta and Bombay are emptied a very few minutes after lunch is over. Government servants in the hills work just as hard as, and perhaps in some cases a little harder than, they do in the plains. Only I am not so sure that it is always the right kind of work, or the most useful kind of

work; and I am certain that it is often not the kind of work that brings them more closely into touch with the people of India and their needs.

It is suggested that it is a good thing for men to break away sometimes from the innumerable petty distractions of big cities, and to sit down and think. So it is, but only in the case of individuals. The idea of a whole Government sitting down to think is a trifle unpractical, and in point of fact the spectacle of rows and rows of Secretaries with wet towels round their heads, pondering the problems of Empire, is not usually witnessed. Many a man has defended hill-stations to me because, he has said, he can work there without interruption. That is precisely why he ought not to be there. If he is helping to rule India he must expect interruptions; he is in India to be interrupted; personal accessibility is a thing that Asiatics greatly prize, and the institution of hill-stations denies it to them. A very able administrator, and one of the most hard-working men in India, once told me that he chiefly valued his months of retreat at a hill-station because they enabled him to "go through his cases carefully." What he meant was that he practically shut himself up, and lived laborious nights and days, poring over masses of documents concerning important points of administration. When he emerged he would no doubt have penned able and conscientious and discerning minutes about every "case"; but that is not governing India as it ought to be governed. Again, hill-stations are defended on the score of health; but there can be no logical distinction between the kind of climate required for working in the Secretariat, and for administering a district. Another favourite argument is that the senior officers of Government have been so long in the country that they cannot endure the climate of the plains, but the obvious answer is that in that case the time for retirement has arrived. The frequent retort of Secretaries is that India does not chiefly consist of big cities, that the problems of India are largely rural, and

that the attention of the Government should be mainly directed to "the ryot at the plough." And what do they see of the ryot at the plough at Simla, or Darjeeling, or Mahableshwar? I have heard these and many other arguments for years, and have answers for them all.

When the Councils were enlarged, Lord Minto said the Government ought to try and guide the new aspirations aright. It will never be done while every civilian aspires to be a Moses on a mountain-top. The time has come for the Governments to descend from the clouds and show themselves to the multitude. As things are, the high officials swoop down on the various capitals for a brief period in the cold weather, live in their carpet-bags, are reluctantly dragged into a whirl of rather dull dinners and dances and receptions, and then vanish again, breathless and exhausted, but happy in the vain notion that they have been really "in touch with the people." The enlarged Councils are certainly supplying a valuable corrective; but we shall never get "into touch" in India to the extent we ought to do until the hill-stations are abandoned to the invalids, the ladies, and the babies.

One change which would facilitate a modification of the present system of government from the hills would be the abolition of the obsolete provision of the Act of 1793 which prohibits the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Governors of Madras and Bombay from proceeding to Europe on leave of absence. The essential conservatism of England was strikingly illustrated in the solemn debate upon this subject in the House of Lords on March 17, 1908, when a whole series of grave and, in my belief, quite illusory reasons were adduced why the statute should not be abolished. I have always thought that particular debate worthy to be compared with a debate during, I think, the Stuart period, in the House of Commons, in which it was seriously declared (and possibly duly resolved, for I write without reference) that the building of a bridge across the

Thames at Westminster would assuredly bring about the disruption of England. The enactment prohibiting Viceroys and others from proceeding to Europe was passed in the days of George III., and confirmed in the reign of William IV.; it related to the age of sailing-ships, and not to the age of steam; it became law at a time when the voyage to India occupied anything from a year to eighteen months; and it was characteristic of a certain type of English procedure that many new and portentous reasons were discovered more than a century afterwards to prove that it should not be abandoned.

The debate was initiated by Lord Lamington, who had recently relinquished the Governorship of Bombay. His case was particularly hard. Private reasons of an urgent character compelled his presence in England for two or three weeks. He could not obtain leave of absence, and was compelled to resign; and thus the Presidency of Bombay was prematurely deprived of a Governor who was unusually popular with the people. I have never seen any Governor receive such an extraordinary ovation as was accorded to Lord Lamington when he went one night, without protection, into the heart of the native city on the occasion of a great religious festival. He only asked for eight weeks' leave, and his successor did not reach India until three months after his resignation. The provision prohibiting leave to Europe should be abolished, but I would still make it somewhat exceptional for these exalted officers of State to obtain such leave.

I wonder if I may, without offence, add a few words regarding the annual flood of visitors to India, which steadily increases. Year after year, as I sat in the Gate of India, the returning cool breezes wafted to our shores amiable and earnest gentlemen, of all ranks and callings, many of whom it became my duty and pleasure to receive. From them I learned with due meekness, on many occasions, that the wrong way to know a country was to live in it, and that

to the soaring vision of the visitor was vouchsafed Pisgah-sights denied to the humble toiler in the misty valleys. In Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's recent book on India I encountered the following statement:

"A shrewd observer, who will make numerous mistakes in describing details, will understand the general tendency of the sum total of Indian life more accurately than one who has lived so long in the country that he has ceased to see it except as a moving mass of detail."

It may be so; my gaze has certainly never been piercing enough to discern "the general tendency of the sum total of Indian life"; but I have often wondered what is the peculiar property in the Indian atmosphere which makes it so lucent to the visitor, and so opaque to the resident. No one dreams of saying these things about China, or South Africa, or America; no one claims to have estimated "the sum total of French life" during a six weeks' trip to Paris and the Riviera; the most confident of American writers never thinks of beginning his little book about England in this strain. However, if to have lived in a country is a disqualification for writing about it, I set it down to my disadvantage. I have been told that during his journey through the East Lord Rosebery, at a public dinner, said with a twinkle that "he had been in India long enough to write a book, but not long enough to make a speech." The remark is still remembered in India. It is not surprising that Anglo-Indians turn with relief from Mr. MacDonald's preface to such prefaces as that with which M. Chailley opened his memorable book on Indian administrative problems. He began thus: "The work I now give to the public is the fruit of twenty years of thought, and ten of actual labour." May others be as deliberate!

Yet I should be unfair to Mr. MacDonald if I did not add that his book is in many respects the best account of a short visit to India I ever remember to have read. In a

brief time he accomplished much; and if he listened to idle gossip about Lord Curzon and the partition of Bengal, at least his previous studies enabled him to grasp something of the real inwardness of the land revenue system, which few visitors care to investigate. His criticism on other points need not be examined here. All I wish to urge is that Englishmen who visit India should go there with a fair and open mind, should endeavour to refrain from sneering at those of their countrymen who have to live there, should neither seek to exaggerate unrest on the one hand, or on the other try to smell out supposed administrative abuses like a Kaffir witch-doctor. In Mr. MacDonald's book there is a remark that jars. He seems to have gone to a "smiling Babu" in an office and said: "Now tell me about T.A." (travelling allowances); and the Babu grinned "a knowing grin." Perhaps Mr. MacDonald did not quite understand the smile; perhaps his Babu was smiling at the visitor who had sallied forth with the exalted intention of ascertaining "the general tendency of the sum total of Indian life," and had ended by questioning clerks about the travelling allowances of their chiefs. Mr. MacDonald doubtless sometimes travels on missions for the organisations with which he is connected. I wonder what he would say if he found some "sun-dried bureaucrat" furtively asking the waiter how much he had paid for his dinner. There would be very little difference between the two proceedings.

We want more men of the stamp of Mr. MacDonald to visit India. It is imperative that the work of Great Britain in India should receive the sympathetic attention of "the most ancient democracy in the world," to quote a phrase used by Mr. Winston Churchill when he was still a subaltern of horse. Until the next great decline of civilisation, the class of which Mr. MacDonald claims to be one of the leaders is destined to receive a larger and still larger share of power. The fate of India may lie in its hands; its representatives ought to understand Indian problems; Labour members

should be encouraged by every possible means to go to India and see the work of their countrymen for themselves. But they should go there with a little less self-confidence, a little less readiness to blame and to sneer, a little more reluctance to hold private conferences with smiling clerks; and they should return with a desire to tell their fellows of the better side of the Administration, as well as of its admitted defects.

And is India such an open book to the stranger as Mr. MacDonald believes? Is it so easy to lay bare the soul of a people, or even its material desires? All through the summer of 1911 Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues in Parliament were worrying about the Parliament Bill and the Insurance Bill and kindred questions; this is not a party book, and I mention these measures in no scoffing spirit. But in the moment of victory came the swift revelation that the masses of the people had been thinking of something entirely different, and the Parliamentary Labour Party stood revealed as completely out of touch with their nominal followers. If he failed to get into the minds of his own people in England, and stood temporarily repudiated by a large section of his own party and his own Press, is Mr. MacDonald so sure that he understands the people of India better than their administrators? I know the kind of retort I may receive; I may be told that I am mistaken, and know nothing of labour matters; and I therefore venture to add that I have seen something of great strikes and labour politics in several lands, and it is a good many years since I involuntarily accompanied Mr. Tillett in a hasty retreat before a charge of heavy dragoons. But I am not quite certain that I have yet discerned the "sum total" of the labour movement.

In considering the question of unrest in India, the many reassuring signs now visible should be duly noted. The long story of progress and development which I have here recorded is not the story of a country on the verge of a general upheaval. It is not a story of misgovernment and

spoliation, as was the case in France in the eighteenth century: nor is it a story of stagnation, such as existed in Japan in the first half of the nineteenth century. The conditions are admittedly not the same, for we are governing myriads in an alien land; but though there may be occasional further ebullitions, and though nothing should induce us to weaken the exiguous military resources upon which we must in the last resort rely, we may reasonably continue to contemplate our Indian Empire without serious apprehension, so long as our rule is just and tolerant and sympathetic, so long as we listen attentively and responsively to the aspirations of the Indian people, so long as we do not make the mistake of supposing that our control is chiefly accepted because it is supported by bayonets, and not because it is founded in justice and clemency and the arts of good government.

XIV

CONCLUSION

THERE were four great principles by which Lord Curzon was guided during his Administration, and he disclosed them in his last words to India,

The first was "the recognition that for every department of the State, and for every branch of the Administration, there must be *a* policy instead of *no* policy, *i.e.* a method of treating the subject in question which is based upon accepted premises, either of reasoning or experience, and is laid down in clear language, understood by the officers who have to apply it, and intelligible to the people to whom it is applied." As he said, it was "the negation of a policy of drift."

The second was regard for the welfare of "the Indian poor, the Indian peasant, the patient, humble, silent millions, the 80 per cent. who subsist by agriculture, who know very little of policies, but who profit or suffer by their results, and whom men's eyes, even the eyes of their own countrymen, too often forget." Lord Curzon said that the peasant "has been in the background of every policy for which I have been responsible, of every surplus of which I have assisted in the disposition."

The third was "to be frank and outspoken, to take (the people) into open confidence as to the views and intentions of the Government, to profit by public opinion, instead of ignoring it, not to flatter or cozen, but never to mystify or deceive." He thought there was "something manlier in

treating your critics with respect than in pretending that you are unaware even of their existence."

The fourth was "everywhere to look ahead; to scrutinise not merely the passing requirements of the hour, but the abiding needs of the country; and to build not for the present but for the future." He held that "the one great fault of Englishmen in India is that we do not sufficiently look ahead."

How far Lord Curzon's labours fulfilled these principles I have endeavoured to show in the course of this narration. I began by giving a summary of the chief events of his Viceroyalty; I have reviewed in greater detail the principal results of his policy; and it is not my intention to discuss further a series of achievements which have been already dealt with. These concluding observations are merely intended to note a few personal aspects of Lord Curzon's work in India which have still to be recorded; and they are not in the nature of a final estimate, for it must be manifest that a final estimate is the one thing which it is my duty to avoid. That, at least, must be left to the "future historian," the vague and unborn censor visions of whom are supposed to visit Viceroys of India in their dreams. To these notes I shall add an indication of two or three larger questions of reform, far larger than any settled by Lord Curzon, which appear to me to be arising for consideration in connection with the British control of India. I am conscious, at its close, of the many omissions of this book, and of the many aspects of Lord Curzon's Administration which have received either too brief mention or have been disregarded altogether. One example may be cited. I have said nothing about his careful adherence to the principle of the progressive increase in the employment of Indians in the Government Services; yet it was one of the most consistent features of his period of office. The whole question of the employment of Indians in the higher branches of the Services is, however, very much

misunderstood. The Government of India stated just before the last census that, "roughly speaking, about 1200 Englishmen, including military officers and others, are employed in the civil government" of the whole population of India. The late Sir John Strachey said that excluding the 864 civil charges ordinarily held by members of the Indian Civil Service, "there are about 3700 persons holding offices in the superior branches of the Executive and Judicial Services, and among them there are only about 100 Europeans."

Lord Curzon was a more zealous champion of the interests of the people of India than they ever knew, or than they realise even to-day. Time and again he braved unpopularity among his own people in order to vindicate that impartial sense of justice which demanded punishment for the maltreatment of Indians by Englishmen. Such cases are much rarer in India than is supposed, but when they occur the offender too often escapes punishment. I will not dig amid buried ashes, nor will I enter into an episode concerning a famous and gallant regiment, which occasioned much excitement at the time; the true facts are no doubt on record, but this is not the occasion on which to discuss them. While holding that Lord Curzon was amply justified in his action in specific cases, my impression is that in his anxiety for the protection of Indians from assault he allowed his general policy to go too far. All Indians are not pacific in demeanour, and there came a time when truculent persons deliberately began to offer subtle provocation to Englishmen, in the hope that they would induce an assault which, under the new special orders, could be reported direct to the Viceroy. But whatever difference of view there may be upon the subject, this was not a Viceroy who was oblivious of the interests of the people committed to his charge.

Up to the end of his Viceroyalty, Lord Curzon was accustomed to move about among the people unattended and unprotected, and enjoyed far greater freedom than has sometimes fallen to the lot of his successors. The untravelled

imagination figures the Viceroy of India sallying out amid troops of sheltering horsemen; such was never Lord Curzon's normal practice. He was wont to drive himself and Lady Curzon about Calcutta during the afternoon in a mail phaeton, followed only by a couple of troopers; and his frequent recreation was to walk through the city in the company of an aide-de-camp, and sometimes quite alone. The anger of the *literati*, the manufactured agitation against the partition, never had the slightest effect upon the enthusiastic demeanour of the populace towards him. He knew every street and slum in Calcutta, and it was no uncommon sight to see the Viceroy, without a companion, strolling through some forgotten byway surrounded by hundreds of cheering Bengalis. Once he and Lady Curzon were driving alone near Kali Ghat, when thousands of the people gathered and begged them to go and see the temple of the grim goddess Kali, which has since become—and no doubt was even then—the chosen shrine of the opponents of British rule. They went on foot to the temple amid thunderous applause.

I have said something of the ill-health Lord Curzon had to contend against during the later years of his residence in India. The public knew very little of his sufferings. The only important engagement he ever failed to keep was the opening of the new Daly Chiefs' College at Indore, in the month of his departure. When he stood before the world, his tall erect figure and high colour gave no clue to inward agony; on the day he left India he seemed outwardly almost unchanged since the day of his first arrival. Yet much of his writing was done upon his back; and there was one occasion, of which even Simla did not hear, when he was confined to his bed for three weeks. The work of his Administration never stopped; he received the Secretaries in his bedroom, made decisions, wrote minutes and letters, and continued his interminable labours without a break. He rarely finished working before 2 A.M., and sometimes 3 A.M.;

even after such an exhausting function as a State Ball it was his practice to work for two or three hours. There are stories of interviews with the Foreign Secretary lasting for six hours, when immense files of papers were disposed of. Though he excelled all his subordinates in his untiring industry, Lord Curzon was by no means singular in this respect. The higher officials of the Government of India are sometimes accustomed to get through an amount of work which would surprise their Civil Service colleagues at home. They are not all hard workers, but the majority slave at their tasks. I know one man, still on the active list, who in a time of great emergency worked for three days and two nights without ceasing.

In the course of this book I have frequently said that Lord Curzon did this or did that, and it may be thought that the phrase was a mere figure of speech, and that the particular labour ascribed to him was really the work of discreet and competent subordinates. The astonishing and unusual fact is that wherever this statement is made, it is generally literally true. No Viceroy was ever more loyally served, but no Viceroy, not even Dalhousie, ever did so much himself. He is credited with having written every Note in the files with his own hand, and he also composed the majority of the despatches, not only in the Foreign Department, of which he held the portfolio, but in all the departments. He never allowed others to draft his papers for him, and would not even dictate to an amanuensis. I do not think this overwhelming activity is entirely a matter for commendation, though it was really the outcome of temperament. The common belief among the men in India who were most closely associated with Lord Curzon is that he did far too much, and that he would have been wiser had he spared himself more. There is a little to be said for the methods of Palmerston after all; I have heard that he rarely did anything at the Foreign Office, except make a periodical incursion and stir people up.

A widespread delusion about Lord Curzon is that he made an unusual number of speeches while in India. No accusation was more frequently brought at the time of his return to England, and upon it were based homilies implying that the Viceroy of India ought to impose upon himself a Trappist vow of silence. The facts speak for themselves. Lord Curzon was in India, including one break, during a period of close upon seven years. He delivered in all two hundred and fifty speeches, long and short. Lord Lansdowne, who was only in India for the normal period, and who has never been charged with an undue fondness for oratory, made one hundred and seventy-three speeches. When it is considered that Lord Curzon's total includes the speeches delivered in the Persian Gulf voyage, in tours of unusual length, at the Delhi Durbar, and on other special occasions, it will be gathered that he only made the usual routine number of speeches. The difference was that he put more into his speeches than is generally the case with Viceroys. He prepared them with great care, and delivered them with force and impressiveness. He always remembered that he was speaking, not only to his immediate audience, but to the people of India also. Whenever he made a speech, it was read everywhere with eager interest and delight, and resounded throughout the country. Though he has not the grace of Lord Rosebery as an after-dinner speaker, I venture to think that Lord Curzon is now, on great occasions, the best Parliamentary orator of his time. He does not possess Mr. Asquith's inimitable conciseness, nor the personal magnetism of Mr. Lloyd George; he does not approach Gladstone or Bright at their greatest; but for power of diction, stately delivery, orderly marshalling of points, and the faculty of carrying conviction, no other Parliamentarian of the day is quite his equal. He can hold a working-class audience enthralled with as much ease as he can grip the attention of the phlegmatic House of Lords. The speeches of such a man, in a country practically unused

to the higher type of public oratory, were bound to attract exceptional attention.

Upon one point Lord Curzon was extremely punctilious. He met his Executive Council with great regularity, and it was very rarely indeed that the weekly meeting was missed. The practice has more recently fallen into considerable abeyance, though possibly it has now been resumed. To ignore it is to ignore one of the fundamental principles upon which the Government of India is based. Lord Curzon may not always have accepted the views of his Council, but he never failed to let his colleagues know what he was doing.

It was inevitable that the Government of a Viceroy who set sail for India with the avowed intention of overhauling the entire system of administration, and who undertook many other reforms in addition, should have very little that was somnolent in its character. The stimulating effect of Lord Curzon's control was felt throughout the land, and necessarily produced considerable opposition in various directions. The surprising thing was, not that there was opposition, but that there was not more. The public in India were never left in the slightest doubt about Lord Curzon's aims. He practised no concealment, never disguised his intentions on any subject, and while he appreciated popularity, never made the slightest attempt to seek it. Of all the charges brought against him from time to time, the one I never heard from any quarter was that of equivocation. Whenever he fought, it was always in the open. I am not sure that he would not have been more discreet if he had said less about his intentions. His motive was obvious enough; he wanted to carry the public with him; but many worthy people have a habit of mind which is inclined to resent the whirlwind which accompanies the advent of a Viceroy with lists of reforms ready tabulated in dozens, and a vigorous determination to carry them through. It would perhaps have been wiser to disclose them afterwards. The

abnormally efficient character of some of Lord Curzon's qualities sometimes unconsciously caused irritation among his subordinates, though the irritation rarely lasted. To a marvellous memory for things great and small alike, and a mind which retained every passing impression with the accuracy and vividness of a photographic plate, he added a judgment which was so rarely wrong that its very infallibility occasionally incensed susceptible men. The officer who was suddenly shown that he was incorrect in his facts, and still more mistaken in his conclusions, might realise at once that he was out of court; but the consciousness of error, possibly conveyed, amid pressure of work, with a touch of acidity, did not somehow make the revelation less exasperating. These were surface characteristics which left no deep mark. What was of greater moment was that the towering personality of the Viceroy—for in his later years he unquestionably towered above all around him—was so overwhelming as unduly to restrict initiative in his subordinates. Just as the best prose should have pedestrian passages, so in the Viceroyalty of India it is perhaps well that an Amurath does not always an Amurath succeed.

There were two very noticeable defects in Lord Curzon's personal character as an Indian administrator. One was that while he said he courted criticism—and undoubtedly he did—he was always very restive under it. He was so conscious of the rectitude of his motives and the general accuracy of his judgment that it distressed him to be misunderstood; and he resented a chance, and possibly unfair, newspaper criticism far more than its importance merited. That was rather a characteristic of his earlier years; the great personal trial and grief of the visit to England, and the subsequent relief, had a mellowing influence, as all around him noted. The other was an unconscious defect in controversial method which remained to the end. In any dispute he was almost as eager to make a small point as a great one, and never sufficiently concentrated upon broad essentials alone. It was a defect which was especially perceptible in the discussion about

the military administration. The great point in that controversy was the constitutional issue, and though he made it thoroughly enough, he did not concentrate upon it as much as he might have done. The defect has not been so noticeable in his Parliamentary speeches since his return.

It has been exceedingly difficult to note these points about a statesman whose career, one may hope, has not yet reached its zenith. It is at such a stage that the recorder feels how hard it is to write with discretion about a man still living, without doing injustice, or conveying a wrong impression. These were all minor flaws; they have probably already disappeared in the robuster atmosphere of English public life. I have set them down because they give requisite and, I think, correct points of contrast; and I repeat that these concluding notes are in no sense a final comprehensive estimate, but are merely the finishing-touches to a picture already limned.

That the premature termination of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty was to him a matter of poignant grief has been sufficiently shown. That it was greatly regretted by his Sovereign was revealed by a telegram from the late King Edward, received from Marienbad on August 22, 1905, and expressed in the following unusual terms:

"With deep regret I have no other alternative but to accept your resignation at your urgent request. Most warmly do I thank you for your invaluable services to your Sovereign and your country, and especially to the Indian Empire. Most sincerely do I hope that your health may improve."

In his speech returning thanks for the freedom of the City of London, delivered on July 20, 1904, Lord Curzon made his avowal of faith in the future of British rule in India in these words:

"It is seventeen years since I first visited India; it is thirteen years since I first had the honour of being connected with its administration. India was the first love, and throughout all that time it has been the main love of my political life.

I have given to it some of my best years. Perhaps I may be privileged to give to it yet more. But no man could do this unless he saw before India a larger vision or were himself inspired with a fuller hope. If our Empire were to end to-morrow, I do not think that we need be ashamed of its epitaph. It would have done its duty to India, and justified its mission to mankind. But it is not going to end. It is not a moribund organism. It is still in its youth. and has in it the vitality of an unexhausted purpose. I am not with the pessimists in this matter. I am not one of those who think that we have built a mere fragile plank between the East and West which the roaring tides of Asia will presently sweep away. I do not think that our work is over or that it is drawing to an end. On the contrary, as the years roll by, the call seems to me more clear, the duty more imperative, the work more majestic, the goal more sublime. I believe that we have it in our power to weld the people of India to a unity greater than any they have hitherto dreamed of, and to give them blessings beyond any that they now enjoy. Let no man admit the craven fear that those who have won India cannot hold it, or that we have only made India to our own or to its unmaking. That is not the true reading of history. That is not my forecast of the future. To me the message is carved in granite, it is hewn out of the rock of doom—that our work is righteous and that it shall endure."

With the quotation of that ringing passage from the noblest speech he ever made, I end the story of Lord Curzon's Indian career. He waged no wars, save the constant war against laxity and sloth and indifference and wrong. He sought no conquests, save that he sought to conquer the hearts and gain the confidence of the Indian peoples. He left his heart in India, although he lost through India that which was dearer to him than life itself.

I cannot lay down my pen without recording a warning that questions are likely to arise for settlement in connection

with the administration of India, more fundamental than any with which Lord Curzon was called upon to deal. They concern the whole basis of the British system of control. I do not propose to discuss them, but only to indicate their character. This book is not meant to be a full statement of my own beliefs about India. Such views as have been expressed have been for the most part incidental to the narrative.

The first question is the reform of the Chartered High Courts. Their condition is unsatisfactory, their methods of procedure inadequate, their system of recruitment open to grave objections. No institutions in India are more in need of searching examination at the hands of high and competent authorities.

The second is the constitution and administrative system of the India Office, which has grown to be a vast incubus saddled upon the Indian Empire. It is based upon conceptions which India has outgrown; it is filled with an army of subordinates languidly settling the smallest details of the affairs of a huge Empire, of whose real character they have no knowledge.

The third is the nature of the control exercised by the Secretary of State over the Governor-General in Council. We are rapidly approaching the parting of the ways. We must either give a greater measure of independence to the Viceroy and his Council, or we must be prepared to see India ruled more and more from Whitehall. I am not in favour of weakening the final control of the Secretary of State and of Parliament; such a change would be to reproduce, in another form, an unconstitutional situation somewhat resembling that created by the military controversy. But I hold that the time will arrive when the control must be exercised differently, when the functions of the Secretary of State must be more exclusively revisory in character, when he must concern himself chiefly with broad principles of policy and not with masses of detail. India must be ruled upon the

spot; the Empire that is controlled in detail from an office six thousand miles away will not permanently endure. The whole method by which the Secretary of State handles Indian finances also requires investigation.

It is in view of the gravity of the third question that I regard with great misgiving the movement in favour of a Royal Regent for India, of which so much has been heard of late. I have an open mind on the subject, and am well aware that the appointment of a Royal Regent would be popular with large sections of the Indian peoples. I foresee, however, that the immediate result would be to produce a large enhancement of the power and authority of the Secretary of State. In India the controller of the Government of India would be the President of the Imperial Council, who would have all the responsibility of the office of Viceroy, and none of its prestige. His position under such circumstances seems likely to be an impossible one. The dangers which may ultimately affect the stability of British rule in India partake of the character of world-movements. They will never be met by the expedient of setting up in India a small and pale reflection of the Court of St. James's. My views on this question are by no means final; but at present I can see little but objections to the proposal for a Royal Regent.

Happily no such doubts need be entertained about the entire wisdom of the visit of the King-Emperor and the Queen-Empress. In proceeding to India at the earliest possible moment after his Coronation, King George has taken a course which his revered father would undoubtedly have followed had circumstances permitted. The Crown has become the link to which his subjects in every clime readily attach themselves; and the King's journey symbolises the inauguration of a new era. It demonstrates to the whole world the reality and solidity of British rule in India, deriving as it does its main strength not from the force of arms, but from the loyal acquiescence of princes and peoples

in the supremacy of a British monarch. Never before has a British Emperor set foot in the Orient; no ruler of India has ever held sway over so vast an extent of territory as King George controls to-day. What the Moguls tried in vain to do, the people of these islands have accomplished in full measure. Great Britain has bound the huge territories of India for the first time into one homogeneous and majestic whole, owning willing allegiance to the Sovereign of this realm; and His Majesty goes forth rightly conscious that his dread responsibilities as ruler of one-fourth of the whole human race can no longer be fulfilled save by moving outward among his myriad peoples.

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